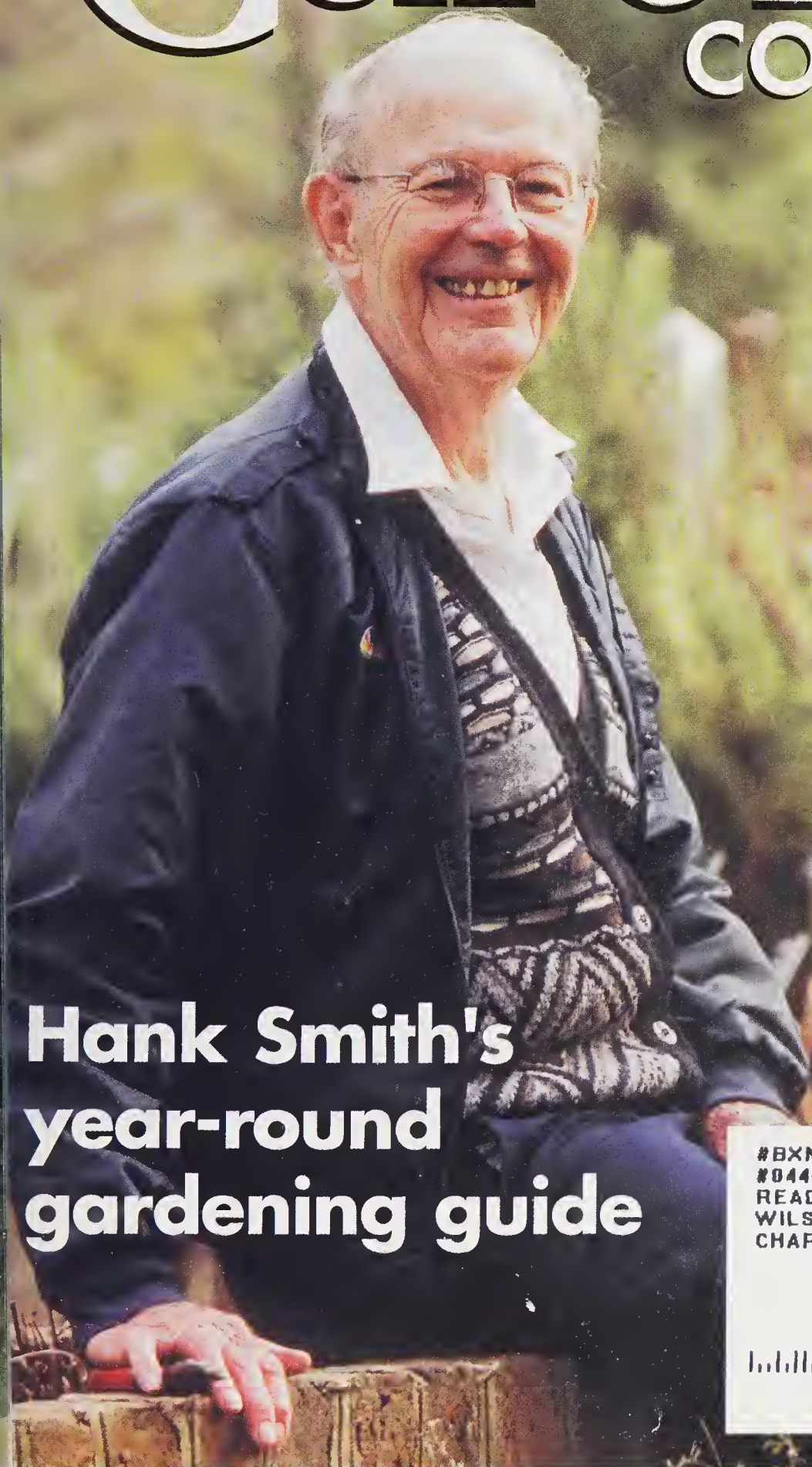


Carolina country



Hank Smith's year-round gardening guide

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FEATURES

THE CAROLINA COUNTRY GARDEN10

An all-seasons guide to gardening in North Carolina
by Carolina Country's longtime gardening columnist Hank Smith.

THE BEST GARDEN I EVER SAW16

Your reports and pictures of outstanding North Carolina gardens.

SLAVE FISHERMEN20

Slaves probably were the most important watermen
along North Carolina's coast from the late 1700s
through the Civil War. Here is an excerpt and some
pictures from historian David Cecelski's new book.

DEPARTMENTS

FIRST PERSON6

Johnnie Austin, the late Blue Ridge EMC
board president, knew that cooperatives are
the people's business . . . Why are coopera-
tives offering new products and services?

ENERGY CENTS30

New electric cooktops.

MORE POWER TO YOU34

Here is the line-up of performers for
Touchstone Energy's "Carolina Calling" TV
show . . . Security at nuclear power plants.

ONLINE37

Thinking about a new computer? Here's some
advice.

MARKETPLACE38-43

A showcase of goods and services.

JOYNER'S CORNER39

Now, really: Where is the center of North
Carolina?

HANK'S GARDENING GUIDE44

Plan summer's colors now.

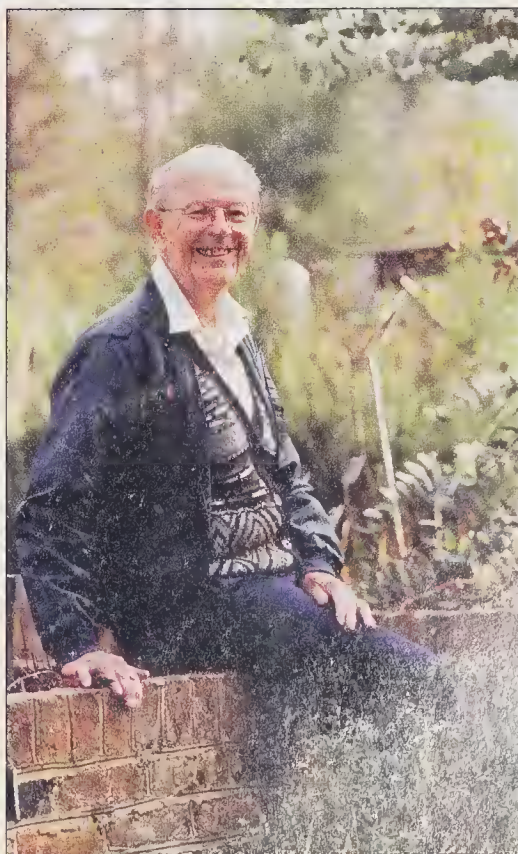
CAROLINA COMPASS46

March events across the state.

CLASSIFIED ADS49

CAROLINA KITCHEN50

Fresh Veggie Pizza, Coconut Cake, and
Coconut Cream Eggs.



On the Cover

Henry J. "Hank" Smith has advised
Carolina Country gardeners since 1983.
We photographed him at the North
Carolina Botanical Gardens in Chapel
Hill. (Photo by ©2002 by Todd Gaul.
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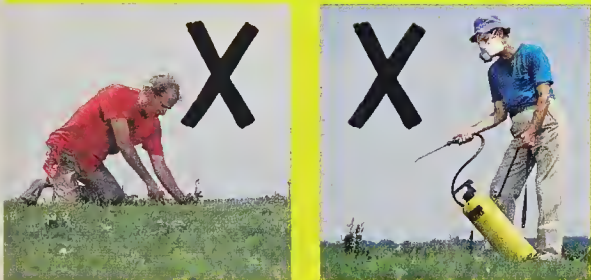


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Johnnie R. Austin (1935-2002)

He truly believed that the cooperative is the people's business

By Douglas W. Johnson

In January, I attended the funeral service of Johnnie Austin, who was president of our board of directors for the last 21 years. I have never participated in a greater outpouring of affection and respect in this region than what we saw at that service. Because I had known Johnnie well for the past 25 years, I certainly understand why there was such a wonderful showing among his family, friends and associates.

I am going to miss Johnnie Austin personally, but I also know that Blue Ridge EMC directors, staff and members will miss him, too. If ever there was an ideal board member and president, Johnnie Austin was it. I can tell you why.

Johnnie Austin knew with all his heart that a cooperative must be totally devoted to its members. The people of his Watauga District elected him to represent them for 31 years, and he took that responsibility seriously. He brought a very strong standard to board meetings: He would always ask, "Is this decision in the best interest of the member-owners?"

One reason Blue Ridge Electric has focused on member involvement is the ethic that Johnnie instilled in the management. He never narrowed the circle to just the board or the management, but instead he included the members. He truly believed that the cooperative is the people's business. He helped ingrain these principles in our culture and the way we do business here.

I first met him in Boone when I joined the Jaycees as a college student. Johnnie was past president of the Jaycees, and I soon found that I could learn a lot from him. He was close to the community throughout his life — as a Mason, a Shriner, a deacon at the First Baptist Church, a First Union Bank board member, a leader in the Chamber of Commerce, Red Cross and United Way. And as co-owner of the family business, Austin-Barnes Funeral Home, he became beloved among many, many families. In their time of grief and sorrow, no matter what their family situations had been, Johnnie made people feel calm and comfortable. It was his personality, his natural honesty, that made all of us feel self-assured and confident in our own abilities to move forward. I am grateful for his generosity in advising me and passing on that sense of confidence. His advice and support were

critical to me as I moved from Blue Ridge EMC's Watauga District office to the corporate office and then to the CEO position.

It may be the nature of our business that consumer-owned cooperatives attract honest, devoted leaders to serve on the elected boards of directors.

Johnnie Robert Austin made his presence known beyond these northwestern North Carolina mountains, too. For six years, he represented 13 Mid-Atlantic and Northeast states on the board of the National Rural Utilities

Cooperative Finance Corporation, which is the most important financial services institution for member-owned utilities nationwide. He also served on the board of our national insurance cooperative — Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange — and for 31 years on our statewide organization, the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, and its Executive Committee. His involvement on the national and statewide levels enriched his understanding of the cooperative utilities program and certainly sharpened the "big picture" for us here at Blue Ridge.

His widow and lifelong partner Carolyn, and his daughter and two sons, know how much the community

around us miss Johnnie Austin. The 63,000 members of Blue Ridge Electric will miss him, too.

And the Blue Ridge board? How can we replace the man who would come to meetings so well prepared, who would run them like a well-oiled machine, who would ask probing questions and continue the dialogue on those critical issues that meant so much, who would reserve his own judgment until all aspects were examined, and who would finally deliver that steady reasoning that made us all confident that we were working on behalf of the cooperative's members? I think he left that tradition with us to carry on.

Douglas W. Johnson is chief executive officer of Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation, which serves more than 63,000 members in Ashe, Alleghany, Watauga, Wilkes, Caldwell, Alexander and Avery counties.



Johnnie Austin (left) and Doug Johnson, 2001.

How come cooperatives are starting other businesses?

Our REA cooperatives program has been a great success due to the dedication of many people to an important well-defined objective. Today, however, the purpose of the Rural Electrification Act is being abused by a few cooperatives' administrators.

Through wholly-owned subsidiaries, they are expanding their cooperatives into other "energy-related services," such as gasoline, heating oil, propane and heat/cool equipment installation. These new ventures are in direct competition with the private sector. This violates a basic principle of our American free enterprise system that such publicly funded programs (as REA) avoid competing with the privately funded sector. It is wrong to use the regional monopoly and the resources of a government subsidized electric cooperative to operate an unregulated for-profit (or loss) business. It is unfair to the competing business owners and their employees, and it is also unfair to the co-op members when the resources of their electric co-op are used for purposes other than delivering electric service.

I don't buy the argument that the for-profit subsidiaries can be kept separate from the not-for-profit operations through

accounting procedures. Businessmen know, and recent headline events show, that reliable accounting is hard to do. The situation is complicated by the fact that some cooperatives' employees and equipment are sometimes used for the subsidiaries.

Proper accounting becomes an even greater concern when you consider the conflict of interests between the "for-profit" operations and the "not-for-profit" operation. The final straw: In the case of my co-op, the management is operating secretly. They tell me that the records of our wholly-owned subsidiary are not available to the members.

As manager and part owner of a competing business, I have a special interest in this issue. I believe that some directors are taking our cooperatives down the wrong road. What is their ultimate objective? And, what will become of the electric cooperative program and our whole system if they succeed? Who pays if they fail?

*Bruce Byers, Rutherford EMC member
President of North State Gas Service, Inc.,
family owned, established 1938*

A reply from the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives

Since our formation in the 1930s, North Carolina's electric cooperatives have been providing affordable and reliable electricity to you. In fact, we exist solely for your benefit and are constantly looking for ways to enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve.

For this reason, most of North Carolina's electric cooperatives now offer other value-added services that our consumer-members have told us you want and need. For example, some EMCs have formed separate business entities that offer propane gas, electrical contracting and/or Internet service. We wanted to share the following information with you to explain how these new service providers operate.

North Carolina's General Assembly in 1999 passed legislation clarifying the rights of electric cooperatives to branch into new services. Many of our consumers and board members from the mountains to the coast wrote, called and visited state lawmakers who confirmed that electric cooperatives had rights similar to other utilities in meeting the needs of our communities.

Electric cooperatives forming a new business must meet strict parameters outlined in state and federal laws that specifically protect you and your assets. Additionally, the North Carolina Utilities Commission oversees these EMC business entities and has standing authority to investigate complaints. Not unlike any other competitive, for-profit business, certain documents, records and working papers are considered proprietary to protect the entity's position in the marketplace and are not available to the public.

Each subsidiary operates separate and apart from the electric cooperative. Your not-for-profit electric cooperative will continue to provide your electricity at cost and return any revenues in



Some cooperatives have formed new businesses to meet member and community needs.

excess of costs to you in the form of capital credits.

The new ventures are offered by for-profit entities subject to all state and federal taxes levied on other businesses offering the same services. Even though government facilitated the creation of electric cooperatives, our new initiatives receive no special treatment or financial assistance from government.

You, our consumer-owners, ultimately decide through your elected cooperative representatives if and when an electric cooperative will launch a new service.

Whenever electric cooperatives consider any business decision, we first ask, "Is this good for the consumers of this community?" If the answer is "yes," we further examine to see if it makes good business sense. If it does, we then move forward.

In communities where we have moved forward with new business ventures, we have created jobs, provided needed services, generated tax revenues, and in many cases offer lower prices for these goods and services while improving customer service.

To electric cooperatives, this is the ultimate proof of success. Since we are owned and operated by you, our members, we resolve to put "Consumers First" in every venture we undertake.

Contact us:

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Barn in winter

I've always liked this picture of the old barn, quiet and peaceful on the cold, white, crisp, fresh snow. I think of making soup, sipping hot chocolate and sitting in front of the wood stove.

*Sally White
High Point*

WHAT CHILDREN WILL SAY

No beans about it

My 5-year-old great-granddaughter is very strong-minded. She knows what she likes and doesn't like and will let you know.

On one of her visits this year, she told me she was hungry and would like a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. After I fixed her one and gave it to her, she took a bite and brought it back to me.

"Grandma," she said. "I don't like beans in my sandwich."

I had used the crunchy type peanut butter, not the smooth she was used to. No amount of explaining could get her to eat the sandwich with "beans" in it.

*Melba Litz
Concord
Union Power Cooperative*

Bath time?

One day my great-grandson and I were sitting in my bedroom rocker talking. He looked at me and said, 'Grandma, you need to take a bath and wash off all those brown spots.'

I told him that it wouldn't do any good because I had had them since I was a little girl.

*Beatrice McCoy
Statesville
EnergyUnited*



A source of strength

My son, Trenton, is 11. He has cancer and has endured a lot of suffering in the past few months. He always comes through smiling. He is a smart, loving and handsome young man. There has yet to be a day that he has complained. Trenton's reply, when asked how he is doing, is simply "I'm fine." He has given so many people faith during his illness. He spends his time going to school and learning to play his trumpet. He has great strength. My son gives me strength, faith and endurance through this very trying time.

*Amy J. Clutter
Union Grove
EnergyUnited*



Elvis and Jake

This is my son Jake and his chicken Elvis. We call him Elvis because he has slicked-back hair and sideburns. We love our chickens. We actually ordered them from an ad in Carolina Country.

*Don and Jennie Hurst
Monroe
Union Power Cooperative*

Learning to shave

This is James Wilson Taylor, known as Wil. He is the son of James Earl Taylor and Kimberly Billups Taylor, and they live in Roanoke Rapids. His dad says he was teaching Wil to shave. (Shave what?) My wife, Catherine, and I are his grandparents.

*Douglas W. Billups
Rocky Mount*



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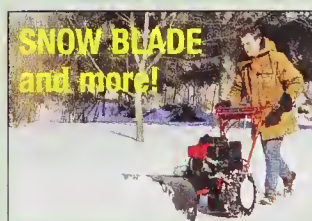
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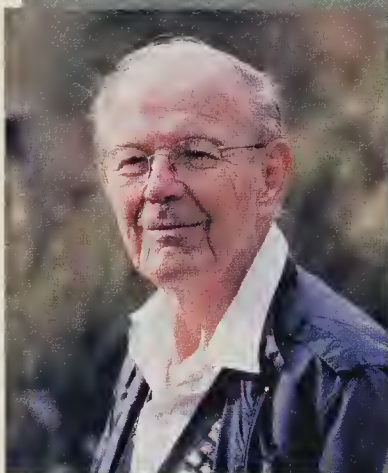
The Carolina Country Garden



The Carolina Country Garden

An all-seasons guide for growing

By Hank Smith



Henry J. "Hank" Smith has advised Carolina Country gardeners since August 1983, making him the most senior of our contributors. He's not only outlasted everyone else, he's also maintained his popularity.

"Hank's Gardening Guide" is among the best-read pages of this magazine. Hardly a

month goes by without someone's asking us for Hank's phone number. (We don't reveal it, because Hank would be answering calls all day long.)

So we've assembled here a collection of Hank's gardening tips for year-round reference. While he considers the variances among North Carolina's regions, Hank advises gardeners to pay attention to the seasonal conditions affecting their own gardens.

A Florida native, Hank Smith was a staff member at North Carolina State University's Horticultural Science Department before becoming a fulltime consultant. He earned bachelor's and master's degrees in horticultural science at the University of Florida. He served fellowships at Harvard and Penn State universities, worked as an Extension specialist at Mississippi State and was landscape editor for Southern Living magazine. He hosted a weekly TV program, published many articles and photographs, and served as an advisor and officer to several horticultural societies.

Hank Smith is also popular among the residents of the Glenure retirement community (2207 Fangley Place, Cary, NC 27511), and he continues to lecture on horticulture when he can.

— The Editors

SEE MORE GARDENING ADVICE ON OUR WEB SITE:

www.carolinacountry.com

Spring

March - April - May

Garden Vegetables and Fruits

Cool-weather vegetable crops now being harvested should be followed by plantings of warm-weather ones like snap beans, squash, green beans, lima beans, okra, lettuce, tomatoes and beets.

When setting tomato and green pepper plants, place collars around the bases to protect from cutworms. Plastic cups with bottoms removed make good collars.

Stake tall-growing tomato plants, or place wire cages over them. As plants grow, secure them to the support with strips of sturdy cloth or discarded pantyhose.

Vegetables can be used as part of the flower garden. For example, carrots to edge a flowerbed (the foliage gives a fern-like edging); strawberries as a low-edging plant or groundcover; cabbages backed with zinnias, with petunias in front.

Plant green beans, cucumbers, squash and other warm season vegetables. Remove blooms from herbs to direct plant energy to produce foliage, not flowers.

In May, there's still time to plant squash, watermelon, tomato and cucumber plants, lima beans and okra.

Trees and Shrubs

The first spring is a critical time for newly-planted shrubs and trees. Water them deeply once or twice a week during dry periods.

Most shrubs respond well to a general feeding of 1/4- to 1/2-pound balanced plant food per square yard of area covered by plant. Do not permit fertilizer to touch stems or leaves. Distribute fertilizer evenly. If there is heavy mulch, or soil is badly packed, cultivate well. Water fertilizer into soil.

Remove faded blooms when they appear on bedding plants and shrubs.

Flowers

When Easter lilies are in bloom, pluck the stamens to remove yellow pollen as soon as it is visible. This prevents ripening pollen from discoloring petals, making flowers last longer.

Dig and transplant small seedlings of nandinas that have grown up under established plants. If established plants have grown tall and scraggly, cut away older, thicker stems at ground level.

The Carolina Country Garden

Even shady spots can contribute summer color from annuals. The following endure somewhat heavy shade: petunia, balsam, calliopsis, godetia, lobelia, cockscomb, flowering tobacco, periwinkle and impatiens.

Good bedding plants for bright sunny spots: portulaca, zinnia, marigold, salvia and celosia.

Plant an evergreen vine such as English ivy or Carolina jasmine along with clematis vine. This provides a green camouflage when clematis is bare of leaves in winter.

Make massed plantings of zinnias, marigolds and petunias. These most popular of annuals contribute summer-long color accents.

For autumn color, set out chrysanthemums. Pinch their tips when plants are about six inches tall. This causes bushy plants and often increases flower production.

As blooms fade, cut daffodils, tulips and hyacinths if not done earlier. Since foliage is manufacturing food for next year's growth, let it remain until leaves mature and turn brown or yellow.

If daffodils multiply and become crowded clumps that produce little to no blooms, lift, divide and replant.

When mums are ready for pinching back, the tip growth that is removed will root easily in coarse, damp sand. In three weeks, roots will have formed. By blooming time, these make good plants.

Lawn

Apply lawn-weed prevention to keep crabgrass seeds from sprouting and becoming summer weeds.

Apply 2-4-D to kill lawn weeds. Carefully follow directions on container.

If large trees cast shade on the lawn and the shaded area is not planted with a groundcover, apply a complete fertilizer as 6-12-12, 5-10-5, 8-8-8, or 12-6-6 at a rate of 30 to 35 pounds per 1,000 square feet. This relieves competition of trees and lawn grasses for nutrients.

Fertilize summer grasses such as Zoysia, Bermuda and Centipede. Do not fertilize fescue until fall.

Start groundcovers of liriope, Mondo grass and English ivy where grass refuses to grow.

Treatments

Five tablespoons of bleach in a gallon of water, shaken well, will help prolong the life of cut flowers. Keep the vase full of solution.

To attract hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies, include bee balm in flowerbeds.

Fertilize azaleas with special azalea and camellia food, or use a balanced fertilizer like 8-8-8 or 10-10-10.

Among good mulches for plants: pine needles, oak leaves, old sawdust, cotton and peanut hulls, shredded bark and bark chips, and peat moss that has been soaked in water for several hours.

Indoors

Water-retaining polymers added to soil at planting time for potted plants will help hold moisture.

Spider plants are well adapted to hanging baskets in partial shade.

Roots trailing out of drainage holes or bulging through the top layer of soil indicate that potted plants need more room. But you may want to remove plant from container and examine root ball before deciding to repot.

Miscellaneous Tips

If you enjoy feeding birds in winter, then plant a row of sunflowers in the back or side of your garden. These tall-growing annuals produce enormous heads of rich, oily seeds. In late summer when flowers have matured, cut and dry them. Next winter, these seed-studded disks will be a true delicacy for birds.

(continued on page 12)



A section of Betty Beutke's garden in Matthews, photographed by Tyler Beutke.

The Carolina Country Garden

Summer

June - July - August



Garden Vegetables and Fruits

Green beans are a good temporary ground cover, easy to eliminate when a permanent use of soil takes place. They also enrich the soil.

On cantaloupes, male flowers usually appear first and do not produce fruit. Some later blooms are female. Bees must transfer pollen from the male to the female flowers for normal development of fruit.

Eggplants need full sun all day.

Replant summer vegetables as they fade and become non-bearing. Vegetables to plant during late July and August include pole beans, tomatoes, okra, peppers, eggplants, potatoes and squash.

If you preserve figs, gather them several days before they fully ripen to reduce damage from splitting and souring.

Trees and Shrubs

Butterfly shrub (buddleia) is difficult to successfully transplant. The best bet is to do root cuttings.

Apply heavy mulch to shrubs during hot, dry days of summer.

Woody ornamentals such as azaleas, oleanders, and hydrangeas now can be propagated from cuttings. Place cuttings in moist, well-drained medium. Most cuttings placed in semi-shaded locations should root within 10 to 12 weeks.

Remove suckers and water sprouts from fruit and nut trees so fertilizer and moisture will be channeled into development of next year's fruiting wood.

As blooms fade on vitex and crepe myrtle, remove faded blooms for another flowering period before cold weather.

Flowers

Sow seed of flowering annuals such as alyssum, nicotinia, zinnia, balsam, cosmos, annual phlox, marigold and tithonia for late summer and autumn bloom.

You can get color from annuals by sowing fast-maturing seeds. Choices include zinnia, cosmos, cleome, and sunflower.

Prune hardy climbing roses when they have finished blooming.

Feed chrysanthemums every two weeks with a complete fertilizer until flower buds begin to show color.

Summer annuals need a monthly feeding of 5-10-5 fertilizer. Check regularly for pest problems. Keep dead blooms pinched from plants.

Caladiums do well in shaded areas and withstand sun if kept watered. Fertilize every two weeks. The better tubers are fed, the larger they will become before winter storage in a frost-free location.

Geraniums are sensitive to over-watering. Apply only after soil becomes almost completely dry.

Gather statice, strawflowers, cockscomb and other flowers to be dried for winter bouquets. Place in paper bags, stems tied into bundles. Hang in a dry place.

Transplant daylilies and irises. New transplants will have time to become well established before cold weather.

Lawn

Heavily compacted soil is easiest aerated with the mechanical device that looks a bit like a lawn roller with hollow tubes attached.

In areas of established ground covers, punch a series of holes over the beds to carry water down to the roots.

Close mowing of lawn grasses during hot, dry weather weakens grass, allowing crabgrass and other weeds to become established before the lawn can recover.

Encourage vining groundcover plants as English ivy and Carolina jessamine (good evergreen vines) by training runners to cover bare spots. Anchor with hairpins made from

four or five inch sections of heavy wire. Wire coat hangers are a good source.

Variegated liriope, easily transplanted at any time of year, creates a good groundcover for narrow, confined areas. Secure container grown or separately existing with a sharp knife. An established clump usually gives four clumps.

Treatments

Newspapers, 8 or 10 sheets in thickness, make good mulch for the vegetable garden. Moisten soil well before placing papers. Sprinkle papers often to preserve moisture. This also aids in preventing germination of weed seeds.

Discourage red spiders on azaleas by spraying a fine mist of water on upper and lower sides of leaves.

Indoors

Houseplants tend to revitalize if moved outdoors in the summer. Move them to dappled shade for a few days, then to a spot shaded from noonday sun.

Geraniums can be rooted for winter houseplants in pots of mellow, loamy soil. Place in well-drained pots. Do not over water. Give broken sunlight. In early October, place indoors in a sunny window.

Miscellaneous Tips

Fire ants are a problem in mid-to-late summer. Check with your local County Extension Office for best controls in your community.

Squirrels sometimes uproot bedding plants but do not eat the roots or leafy growth. Success has been found in scaring squirrels from plant beds by placing small artificial rubber snakes among the plants.

Visit arboretums and show gardens to gather ideas for your personal landscape project and to see and examine new plant materials.

The Carolina Country Garden

September - October - November

Fall

Garden Vegetables and Fruits

When sowing fine seed such as lettuce, mix seed with dry white sand. This helps ensure proper distribution.

Now is a good time to plant a strawberry patch. These ornamental plants with white blossoms and red fruit make attractive, low-edging plants for flowerbeds.

You can plant a fall garden and expect good results from lettuce, radishes, cabbage, spinach, onions, beets, and mustard. Supply sufficient moisture.

In the fall you can sow seeds of cilantro (coriander) and dill herbs. Also, set out transplants or sow seeds of parsley.

Winter squash and pumpkins store better if you leave a few inches of stem attached when you harvest them.

Trees and Shrubs

Cut away panicles of blooms on crepe myrtles. Plants bloom on new wood, producing more flowers before frost. Allow plants to grow into trees, because much of the beauty lies in twisting trunks in winter when top growth is gone.

Continue deadheading (removing blooms) of flowering shrubs.

If leaves of shrubs are not diseased when they drop, leave them beneath plants to serve as over winter mulch. As they decay, they add nutrients to the soil.

Flowers

Cut faded blooms from roses to prevent plant from producing hips, the fruit that contains the seed. This diverts plant energy to producing flower buds instead of seeds.

Peonies usually respond best to late summer or fall planting. They are somewhat undemanding in soil requirement, often succeeding in heavy clay. Plants prefer full sun or light shade.

Order tulip bulbs for planting later in the year. Store bulbs under refrigeration at 35 to 40 degrees for 60 days immediately before planting.

Before planting bulbs in dry, hard soil work in a 4- to 6-inch layer of compost or old sawdust and about two quarts of complete commercial fertilizer per 100 square feet.

Climbing roses need to be well anchored to supports. Winter winds can cause damage if they're allowed to sprawl on ground.

As chrysanthemum flowering ceases, cut back tops. Tender varieties winter best in a cold frame. If that's unavailable, give the roots heavy mulch.

If October and November are dry give perennials a deep final soaking so they will go dormant in good condition. They'll be less subject to winterkill.

Lawn

Lawns need about an inch of water a week. When rainfall is scant, measure the amount applied by using coffee cans at equal distance within the sprinkler coverage. When cans have about an inch of water in them, the lawn will have enough water.

Fertilize tall fescue, fine fescue, and Kentucky bluegrass. Use a complete fertilizer with a 3-1-2 or 4-1-2 analysis. If reseeding is needed, do so now. Reseeding can be done in the spring, but seeds take better in the cool days of autumn.

The key to successful grass seed germination is seed-to-soil contact and continual seed moisture. During warm temperatures,

this could mean watering often. Sometimes lawn areas require aerating and dethatching to achieve good seed germination.

Treatments

As soon as the temperature drops below 85 degrees and is expected to remain so for at least two days, it is safe to spray broadleaf evergreens with oil emulsion to control scale. Applying oil sprays when the weather is too hot can be damaging to plants.

Hand pick slugs or set out pans of beer to trap these nighttime nibblers. If you spread poison bait, be careful to keep it away from children and pets.

When you collect leaves for mulch, select those that curl as they fall such as maple, oak, and birch. Flat leaves can create soggy soil. Mix pine straw with broad leaves to help prevent packing.

A good way to eliminate many insects in the soil is to plow in the fall. Let soil lie fallow over winter. Don't smooth soil surface down into an even layer.

Indoors

For low-light spots in a room, plant pots of low-growing Fittonia. It grows slowly and requires constant moisture and a monthly feeding of liquid fertilizer. Fittonia does well in a dark corner.

Miscellaneous Tips

Keep on alert for sales on garden equipment such as tillers, mowers, hoses and weed-eaters. Garden centers want to move out such to make room for holiday merchandise.

Landscape planning involves more than beauty. Consider these major factors: Is the plan functional and suitable? Is it economical? Does it require too much maintenance? Sometimes it pays to consult a landscape architect, landscape gardener, or a master gardener from your local cooperative extension service.

(continued on page 14)



A deciduous holly tree, *Ilex decidua*, provides colorful autumn shade in the Mercer Reeves Hubbard Herb Garden of the North Carolina Botanical Garden in Chapel Hill.

Photo by Rob Gardner.

The Carolina Country Garden



Winter

December - January - February

Garden Vegetables and Fruits

Remove grass and weeds from vegetable and flower gardens so they don't become a haven for insect eggs and diseases that can attack summer gardens.

Till garden soil to expose wintering insects and their eggs to killing temperatures. Continue to apply compost and other organic materials to vegetable and flower garden sites. Spade in 3 or 4 inches. This prepares the soil for spring plantings.

Sprinkle used coffee grounds on the garden. They're a mild organic fertilizer, and they repel many pests. Earthworms like them, too.

Trees and Shrubs

Trees and shrubs planted now usually have ample time to become established before spring's warm weather arrives.

Considerable root activity occurs during our average winters. In case of severe freezes, mulch heavily from the trunks to the area above the end tips of roots.

After selecting varieties of shade trees, it's important to place the tree with ample distance from the house, drive, patio, or deck. Small trees can be planted at a distance of 15 feet; tall, spreading trees should be placed as much as 40 feet away.

When rainfall is scant, continue to water trees and shrubs. Plants need soil moisture even when temperatures are low.

More shrubs are killed in winter by lack of water than by low temperatures.

Take care in pruning pine trees. If a pine branch is shortened, there are no side

branches left with dormant living buds to provide new growth.

If a plant needs cutting back, leave severe pruning until late winter or early spring, just before plants will be putting forth new growth.

Shrubs that bloom in mid to late summer such as vitex, Eleagnus, crepe myrtle and althea should have any necessary pruning before spring's warm weather arrives.

Flowers

Complete planting of spring-flowering bulbs. Caladiums and gladioli are outstanding plants in this group.

If you've been chilling tulip bulbs in the refrigerator, remove them and get them in the ground before Christmas.

Cut back chrysanthemums every month or six weeks to keep plants compact. They will spread and produce masses of flower-producing stems.

Increase stock of perennials by digging/dividing/resetting these: chrysanthemums, daylily, Shasta daisy, aster, coreopsis and gaillardia.

Lawn

While weather is still cool, plant shade-tolerant ground cover to carpet areas where growing grass is a problem, like underneath shade trees. Some suggestions for shade-tolerant ground cover are vinca, ajugas, lirioppe, pachysandra or English ivy. Lirioppe is useful for planting in narrow restricted spaces.

Treatments

Never place manure in the planting home

of a tree or shrub. Instead, apply manure as top dressing in early spring, but be sure to use old, decayed manure.

Indoors

Houseplants are semi-dormant. Keep fertilizing to a minimum, as it promotes excessive spindly growth during these less than ideal conditions.

Humidity is an important factor in growing healthy houseplants during winter months, even though a plant is resting. A frequent misting is helpful. Place plant containers on a tray of pebbles. Keep pebbles damp by adding water each day.

A good potting soil for houseplants is made of equal parts of good garden soil, peat moss, and sand or perlite.

During winter months, keep houseplants out of overheated rooms. Few plants grow well in the dry atmosphere of 70-75 degrees F. When temperature rises to 75 F and above for long periods of time, most potted plants fail.

Miscellaneous Tips

Seed catalogues for spring gardens will be arriving in the mail soon. Set aside an evening to study the catalogues and plan next year's flower and vegetable gardens.

Last year's compost pile will accelerate in decomposition if covered with a sheet of black plastic that traps the heat.

Plants covered with protective plastic on cold nights need to have the plastic removed the next morning. Excessive heat built up beneath the plastic can stimulate tender new growth too soon.

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—David Moeller, Golden Valley, MN



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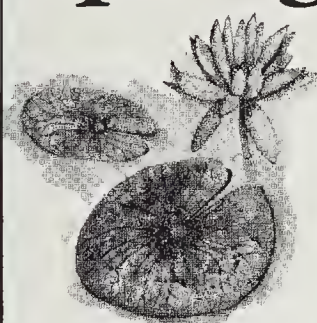
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The Best Garden I Ever Saw

Carolina Country's garden expert, Hank Smith, often mentions that working in a garden has wondrous therapeutic effects. If you're looking for a project that will elevate your mood and boost your confidence, cultivate a garden. Now is a good time to plan it. That garden will get you outdoors and into the earth where we belong. Even if you don't have a patch of ground to turn over, some neighbors probably would love to have you weeding and tending their garden.

As many of you said in your stories for this month's "Nothing Could Be Finer" series, there's no greater satisfaction than growing something and giving what you grow to someone else.

Thanks to everyone who wrote and sent pictures. We couldn't publish them all, but we'll add more to our Web site at www.CarolinaCountry.com

Next month, in our annual "See North Carolina" travel guide, we'll publish your stories about "The Best North Carolina Vacation I Ever Had." [Deadline was Feb. 15.] There's time to send in something for our other themes. See page 19.

— Michael E.C. Gery



Grandma's Snips



Annie Garst

The best garden I have ever seen occupied a small plot of land on the south side of the driveway that stretched from the main road to the big damson tree. This garden never won an award and was never pictured on a magazine cover. It never had any fancy stone border defining its edges. But it was beautiful to me. It was Annie Garst's garden, my Grandma.

Grandma could make anything root. When my mother and I would accompany her to places like a restaurant or a shopping mall, we would look at each other and giggle when we'd spot a plant, because we knew Grandma was not going to leave until she had "just a snip" of the plant. She would wet a napkin and put it around the snipping to keep it from wilting until she got home, where she would immediately stick it in the ground. These "snips" would always take root and flourish.

Grandma had all kinds of colorful flowers in her garden. There were even some plants that I knew were weeds, but Grandma would not pull them up because she said that God put such a beautiful bloom on them, it would be a shame to kill them.

I helped Grandma in her garden when I stayed with her. She never told me to stay away from her flowers or get out of her garden. She taught me how to plant seeds and how to pinch back some of the blooms so they would be prettier. She told me about the different insects we found when digging in the garden. Sometimes she'd fix lunch and we'd have a picnic beside the garden. When we had worked real hard, she would read me a story there, too.

Grandma planted more in her garden than just flowers. The most important thing she planted was fond memories. Grandma and her garden are no longer with us. She died 14 years ago, but those memories she planted will live on forever.

Judy G. Simmons
Madison
EnergyUnited

My Husband's Plot

(Pictured above)

This 120-by-100-foot area is ideal for the size garden my husband wants to grow. To increase the volume of produce, he rotates the planting of plants and seeds every two years. It also helps by spacing rows and plants far enough apart for tilling, weeding and for picking vegetables. At maturity we gather huge amounts of squash, okra, bell pepper, hot pepper and butterbeans every two to three days for several months. It also produces bushels of green beans, tomatoes, yellow and white corn. I didn't think it was ever going to stop!

We have more than enough for us, our family and friends. With canning and freezing we are still enjoying the fresh taste and nutrition of vegetables from the best garden I ever saw.

Betty Honeycutt
Troy
Randolph EMC



For someone who likes to watch things grow, he has a lot to look at. — Betty Honeycutt

Grandpa's Good Friday Garden

Each year when the sights and smells of spring first began to appear, I always knew what was about to happen. My granddaddy would begin planning and planting his yearly garden. He would back the old Farmall SuperA out from the shelter and "get the garden ready." Then he carefully began planting all our favorites, like squash, cucumbers, beets, collards and tomatoes.

He never went by a rule book, but occasionally referred to the Farmer's Almanac. Planting generally began on or around Good Friday, weather permitting. As the plants came up, he plowed, fertilized and chopped when needed. Somehow, his work always paid off. He had the prettiest garden in the neighborhood, and often received compliments from the men down at the hardware store.

We didn't really know all the secrets he used, but we did know that he did it because he enjoyed it. He took pride in it and shared his harvest with family and friends.

In July 2001, he left this world and joined Grandma in a place where they can have a magnificent garden together. I can hear him saying, "This year's garden is better than the last one."

*Melissa Morris-Jones
Snow Hill
Pitt & Greene EMC*

The Garden King of Sanford

Bill Spell of Sanford has the best garden I ever saw. He is retired and enjoys working in his vegetable and flower gardens.

He has beautiful flowers throughout the year. He has a large grapevine, and around each grapevine post he has flowers blooming all spring and summer.

In the fall he plants a lot of collards. On three or four rows, he takes a stake and puts his friends' names on each row. When his friends want collards, they can go to his garden and get them off their row.

I have never seen any weeds or grass in his garden.

He always gives his friends and neighbors anything out of his garden they can use.

Mr. Owen Wicker used to tell me years ago that Mr. Spell was the Garden King of Sanford. He always wins ribbons when he enters vegetables in the Lee County Fair. He won five or six at the fair in October 2001. The "Garden King of Sanford" is still a fitting name for him. Everybody I know, who sees his garden, thinks like I do; it is the best garden we have ever seen.

*Monnie Sullivan
Lillington
South River FMC*



Bill Spell, his wife and his collards.

A North Carolina Garden

After viewing snowdrifts and icy willows from frosted windows during 23 Alaskan winters, the view from my Lake James pine-slab cabin windows is the best garden I ever saw. Arctic cold prevented all but dish gardens and houseplants, so the three raised beds I enjoy are my first efforts at digging in the earth.

My halting beginning was with perennials. What better than plant life that returns something with little effort? While I reveled in my hosta's first season, when their faithful tips returned I knew I was in love. My forsythia, with its tiny yellow trumpets heralding spring, took my breath away.

Impatiens' profusion quickly became a staple. So much return for the annual digging.

For 20 years in Alaska, "spring" meant "thaw," ankle deep mud, dangerous river ice, no travel, and the return of bee-sized houseflies and monstrous mosquitoes. North Carolina spring offers the best garden I ever saw.

Linda D. Edwards
Morganton
Rutherford EMC



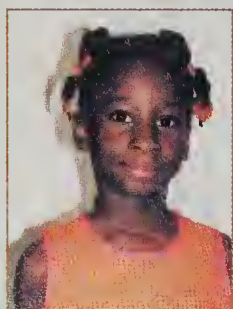
I feared trying bulbs, but finally threw caution to the autumn winds and planted a full bed, said a prayer, waited for spring and was gloriously rewarded.

A Child's Garden

One day I told my father I wanted to make a garden in the yard. He said yes, so we made a garden.

We put tomato seeds, watermelon seeds, apple seeds and pumpkin seeds in it. We put flowers in the garden, too. The flowers were called blossoms, tulips and buttercups. Then the garden was finished, and it was beautiful. I watered it each day.

Jasmine Rene Wilson, age 6
Little Giant's Christian Academy
Fayetteville



Jasmine and a picture of her garden.

The Farmers Market

The best garden I ever saw was next door or in the neighborhood or at a friend's or family's. Gardens are wonderful. Fresh vegetables – so very good! But I haven't forgotten the hard work, failures, too dry, too wet, weeds, insects, and on and on. So the very best garden is the Farmers Market. Go, pay the price and don't complain!

Ruby Gurley
LaGrange
Tri-County EMC



Mockingbird Hill

I moved to Albemarle six years ago into a small trailer rented to me by some friends of my sister. It had no flowers, no shrubs. The trailer sat on a hill in a field by a cow pasture, the prettiest place in the world: open fields, plenty of blue-birds, out in the country, quiet and peaceful. I call it Mockingbird Hill.

I'm 58 years old, and since I was a child I have always loved flowers. I'm very proud of my garden. I did it all with a shovel and a hoe.

Martha Smith
Albemarle
Union Power Cooperative



Savannah's Watermelon Patch

My granddaughter Savannah from New Jersey came to spend the month of July with me. She asked if she could grow some watermelons in my garden. I put in several seeds, which she carefully watered every day.

After the plants were about 3 inches tall, I stopped at a roadside stand and purchased two small watermelons and placed them by her plants without her knowing.

The next morning she was so surprised to see her watermelons when she went down to the garden to water. She ate watermelon all day and took one home with her.

Next year she wants to grow cantaloupes. I hope she is still naïve enough to experience the same thrill.

Elizabeth Carroll
Lansing



She watered those watermelon plants every day.

The New Hanover County Arboretum

The best garden I ever saw was the New Hanover County Arboretum in Wilmington. I was only about 8 or 9 when I went to see it, but I was amazed. They had more flowers, trees, plants and shrubs than I had ever seen before. There were ponds and water gardens, flower gardens and herb gardens. Their herb garden was especially large and varied widely in rare herbs. They even had a Japanese garden that I thoroughly enjoyed.

Birds of several species flew about and perched in the trees. Vines had grown up onto an old barn and were arranged so that they looked just like the outline of the state of North Carolina. To me, this showed a great combination of nature and human talent. This setting of beautiful landscapes, wildlife and art was a relaxing and even romantic atmosphere. Things like the Japanese garden showed an appreciation for other cultures and a wide variety of interests. I enjoyed my trip to the arboretum, and I won't ever forget it.

Joshua Smith, age 14
Rocky Point
Four County EMC

Terry's Tomatoes

My honey, Terry, grows the best tomatoes. People tell him he grows tomato trees. They are very tasty and get compliments. Terry says they are "Better Boy" tomatoes, but he won't tell you anything more.

Denise Bateman
Indian Trail
Union Power Cooperative



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Here are the themes in our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series. Send us your stories and pictures. You don't have to be the best writer. Just tell it from your heart.

May 2002

"Why I Like Living in the Country."

Tell us where and what's good about it.

Deadline: March 15

June 2002

"The Funniest Story I Ever Heard"

True or not so true.

Deadline: April 15

July 2002

"How to Survive a Storm."

Your advice and memories about storms.

Deadline: May 15

August 2002

"My Funniest Pet Story."

Send pictures, too.

Deadline: June 15

September 2002

"My Favorite Photo."

Our annual photo gallery.

Deadline: July 15

October 2002

"How I Learned to Drive."

How good was the teacher, really?

Deadline: August 15

November 2002

"The Dumbest Thing I Ever Did."

And the lesson you learned afterwards.

Deadline: Sept. 15

December 2002

"Advice for Getting Older."

How can we age gracefully?

Deadline: Oct. 15

The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. Only one entry per household per month.
3. Photos are welcome. Digital photos must be 300 dpi and actual size.
4. E-mail or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
5. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
6. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)
7. We pay \$50 for each submission published.
8. We will post on our Web site more entries than we publish, but can't pay for those submissions. (Let us know if you don't agree to this.)
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MARITIME NORTH CAROLINA
DAVID S. CECELSKI

If you wonder who did the hard work along North Carolina's coast in the early 1800s, think about the people who were here as slaves. African American slaves worked the abundant fisheries, the ocean beaches, the swamps and canals, the wide rivers flowing into the sounds, and in the shipping, boatbuilding, canning and related industries that surrounded the water. They learned from natives who

worked the same waters before them, they mingled with seafarers from other parts of the world, and they taught their children, immigrants and anyone else willing to learn fishing, sailing, whatever it took to survive and thrive on the coast.

David S. Cecelski has produced the first major study of slavery on the North Carolina coast. "The Waterman's Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime North Carolina," published in 2001 by The University of North Carolina Press, tells about the lively and important culture that black laborers established on our coast. It covers the period from the latter 1700s through the Civil War, the freeing of slaves and the Reconstruction years just after the war. Few North Carolinians really know about this culture.

In addition to detailed descriptions of the places, society and working conditions that maritime African Americans encountered, Cecelski recounts stories of individuals who lived through these times.

David Cecelski grew up in Craven County and has remained close to the coast ever since then. His professional life has centered on gathering and telling the history of the coast. He is the Lehman Brady Joint Chair Professor in Documentary and American Studies at Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is the author of several books, including: "Along Freedom Road: Hyde County, North Carolina, and the Fate of Black Schools in the South," (excerpted in *Carolina Country*, September 1994) and "A Historian's Coast: Adventures into the Tidewater Past."

"The Waterman's Song: Slavery and Freedom in Maritime North Carolina" is 324 pages with 62 illustrations, a map, notes, glossary of North Carolina watercraft and index. It is available at bookstores in hardcover for \$39.95 and softcover for \$17.95. Or contact the University of North Carolina Press, P.O. Box 2288, Chapel Hill, NC 27515. Phone: (800) 848-6224. Website: www.uncpress.unc.edu

— The Editors

Slave Fishermen

By David S. Cecelski

David Cecelski introduces a chapter on slave fishermen by telling about a young slave named William Henry Singleton who escaped a plantation in about 1850 and traveled a long way to find his family, who were slaves at another plantation. Unable to cross a wide creek of the Lower Neuse River, Singleton saw a lone fisherman on the bank and guessed it would be a black man, "because white people as a rule did not fish," he later wrote. The fisherman was indeed a black man and an ally who could take Singleton across the river and direct him to his family's cabin.

What we've come to know as "traditional fishing" in coastal North Carolina, Cecelski points out, developed between 1870 and the 1930s and was influenced more by Northeasterners than anyone else. "A very different sort of fishing culture flourished in coastal North Carolina before the Civil War," he says, "and one must turn to it to understand slave fishermen and their work."

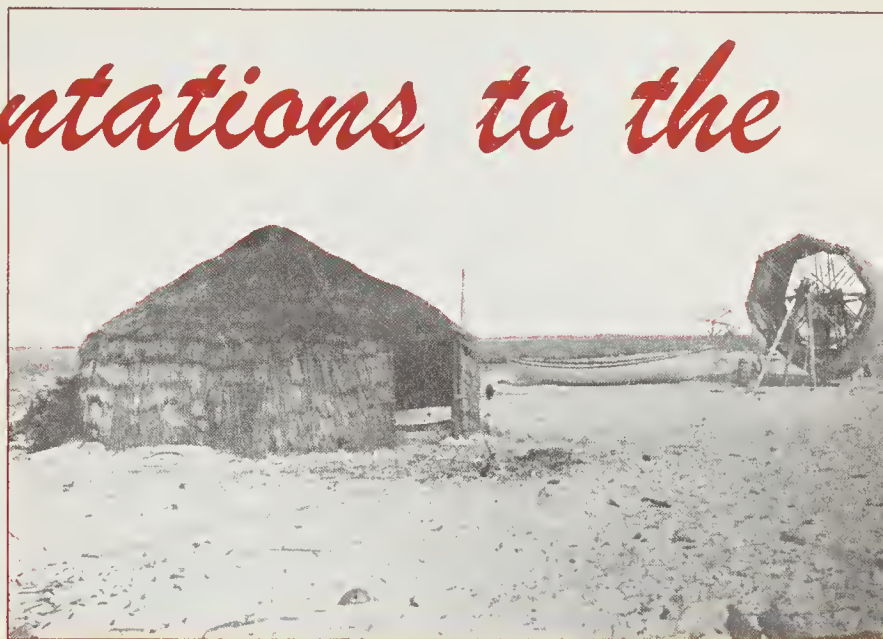
Fishing united plantation slave fishermen with both other African American maritime laborers and the handful of commercial fisheries that emerged prior to the Civil War. A slave who had made a name for himself as a capable fisherman might command or crew his master's other vessels, including flatboats, sloops, and other freight craft that sailed from the local wharf to seaports. He became acquainted with a host of maritime laborers in port and at the watermen's camps scattered along coastal waterways. In slack agricultural seasons, a planter was also prone to send a slave waterman to one of the seashore fisheries, where he might make a profit or at least catch fish and shellfish for the plantation. If a plantation household was disrupted by the master's death or illness, such that he could no longer supervise his bondmen, a slave fisherman had a remarkable skill and could be hired out. The slave could make a profit either in a fishery or by hawking fish and oysters in town. Similarly, if a commercial fishery failed because of bad weather or ill luck, as often happened, a slave waterman likely found himself laboring at least temporarily back in his master's fields, with fishing reduced to a sideline.

Black waterman worked seasonally in all of the small commercial fisheries that existed before the Civil War. The pilots, stevedores, and boatmen employed at Shell Castle Island, the lightering outpost at Ocracoke Inlet, exemplified this facet of maritime life. In 1789, David Wallace and John Gray Blount bought the shoal, formerly known as Old

From the Tidewater Plantations to the Outer Banks

Rock, and built it up with sand and oyster shells into a 25-acre island. The Shell Castle complex eventually included a wharf, several warehouses, a gristmill, a lumberyard, a general store, a ship chandlery, and a tavern. Blount and Wallace employed approximately 20 slaves to unload cargo from seagoing vessels onto 35- to 75-ton lighters. The outpost also housed pilots and their boat crews, an unknown number of whom were African Americans. Wallace managed Shell Castle, but the outpost was part of Blount's burgeoning empire. Blount was a reckless and fabulously wealthy speculator in swamp-lands, plantations, and slaves, eventually accumulating more than a million acres of land. He used Shell Castle to ensure a strong trading presence at the state's busiest inlet and also as a way station for his vessels that engaged in the West Indian trade. Fishing was a minor part of his Shell Castle enterprise but helped to balance his commerce with the West Indies and occupied his maritime slaves in slack seasons.

As early as 1803, the slaves at Shell Castle Island were already operating a dolphin fishery. A tremendous number of the sea mammals fed between Bogue Inlet and Hatteras Inlet every winter. In small boats, black watermen surrounded the dolphin pods and snared them by the score in long, heavy, wide-meshed seines. The seiners were known to have caught 200 or more in a single haul. They deployed several nets independently and fastened them together after the dolphins had been surrounded. That typically required four boats and a total of 15 to 18 crewmen. The rest was a grisly busi-



Mullet fishermen's camp, nets, and skiff, Shackleford Banks, ca. 1900. From Hugh M. Smith, "Fishes of North Carolina" (Raleigh: North Carolina Geological and Economic Survey, 1907).

ness. Once they had trapped them in the surf, the slave boatmen waded into the water and knifed the dolphins that had not already drowned. Then they gaffed the animals and dragged them ashore. Cutting off the flippers and dorsal fins, the men stripped off the skin and blubber and rendered their oil by fire. Each dolphin yielded on average 6 to 8 gallons of oil that was sold as an illuminant or lubricant.

Though not as dramatic as the bloody fracas of wrestling dolphins in the surf, catching mullet also tested boatmanship and ingenuity. As early as 1793, the slave crews at Shell Castle Island sailed 90 miles south in the autumn to harvest striped, or "jumping," mullet for several weeks at Cape Lookout, at the western point of Core Banks. Starting in late summer, mullet gathered in tremendous schools for a southward migration along the shoreline between New River and Ocracoke Inlet. Out at Cape Lookout, the slave boatmen caught the delectably sweet fish in long, shallow nets and hauled them ashore on a beach or shoal, where they salted them and packed them in barrels, while no doubt putting more than a few aside to roast for their suppers. Mulleting demanded able boatmen who knew their way around local waters but also required an intimacy with the barrier islands to tolerate the camp life. A hardy, seasoned waterman who had grown up around the islands could find a cornucopia of fish, shellfish, and

small game. To strangers, the banks usually seemed only a weary desert: hot in summer, cold in winter, arid, buggy, and exposed to vicious storms.

For shelter in these harsh conditions, mullet fishermen drew on building practices and an architectural style that West African slaves had originally brought to the North Carolina coast. Grasping for words to describe one of the mullet camps on Ocracoke Island, a surprised traveler called it “a Robinson Crusoe looking structure,” but of course he had never seen a West African roundhouse before. He was by no means the only coastal visitor intrigued and mystified by the mullet camps. Mullet fisherman built their shelters with vertical round walls and conical or hemispherical roofs. They left a small hole near the apex of the roof to release fire smoke, and, for access, they provided a rectangular opening, often only large enough to crawl through, facing away from the cold northeasterly winds that prevailed all winter. The men constructed the framework of juniper (red cedar) or live oak limbs brought from the maritime forests or from “ghost forests” overrun by migrating sand dunes. They covered the frame top to bottom with layers of thatching, apparently salt-marsh cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) and possibly black needlerush (*Juncus roemerianus*), both extremely resistant to fire and salt spray. The fisherman bound the layers to the framework with strands of bear grass (*yucca*). Documented immediately after the Civil War along a hundred-mile stretch of coastline from Bogue Banks to Ocracoke Island, this African American mullet camp design was ideally suited to enduring the

salt spray, high winds, and intense summertime heat on the Outer Banks and other barrier islands.

Near Cape Lookout, other African American boatmen worked seasonally at a whaling fishery. From February to May, two or three crews pursued pilot, humpback, and sperm whales from camps at Shackleford Banks. A typical camp had three boat crews of six men each. Lookouts searched the horizon for whales while the other men seined along the shore for whatever fish could be caught and salted. When the lookouts spotted a whale, the crews dashed their pilot boats through the surf and pursued the great cetacean until they could harpoon it. The whale was allowed to “have its run” while a wooden drag attached to the harpoon by a long line gradually wore it down. When the boats caught up to the whale, a gunner killed it with an explosive cartridge. Ashore, the whalers stripped off the blubber and “tried out” its oil. Whalers were a poor class of men who made meager livings almost entirely from the sea, and the capture of even one or two whales made for a profitable season.

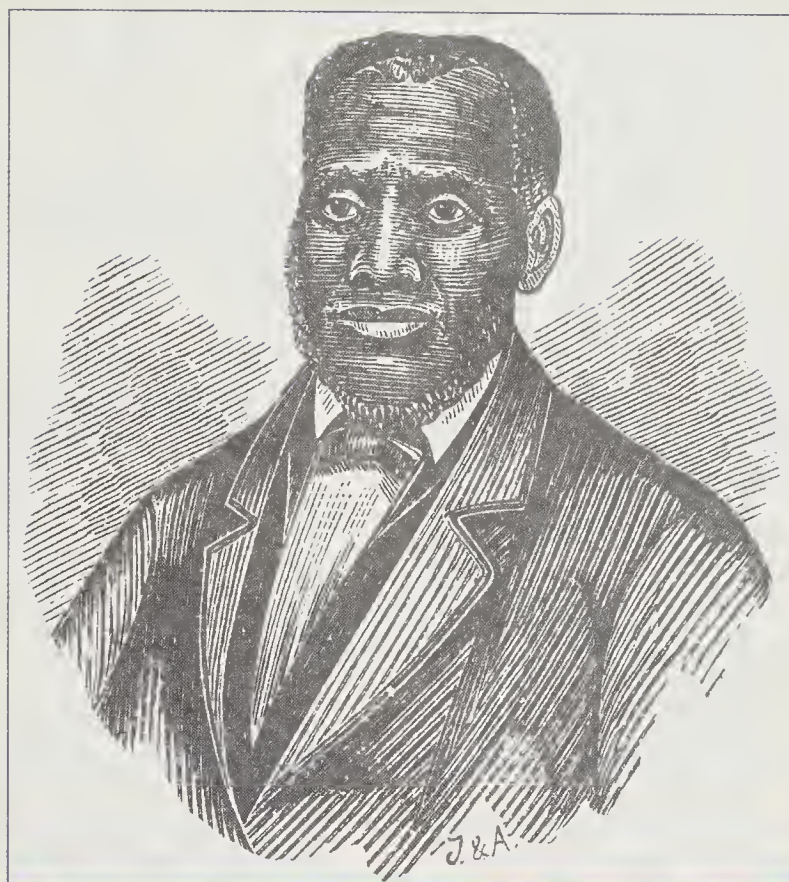
Far more than they chased whales, slave watermen plied oyster beds so vast that modern observers might find their size beyond belief. Even 20 years after the Civil War, the state’s first oyster survey charted more than 10,000 acres of natural oyster beds. The surveyor, Lt. Francis Winslow, found places such as Core Creek, near Beaufort, that had so many oysters he found it “easier to locate the spots where they were not, than those where they were.” Not until 1890 did Chesapeake Bay oysters decline enough to inspire Baltimore packing



Engraving of mullet fishermen at their camp, Shackleford Banks, circa 1880. From George Brown Goode, ed., “The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States,” 5 secs. (Washington, D.C.: Commission of Fish and Fisheries, 1884-1887), sec. 5, vol. 2.

companies to open branch plants in North Carolina. Before the Civil War, local watermen mainly worked oyster beds near coastal villages, particularly in the vicinity of Sladesville, Portsmouth, Bay River, Hunting Quarters, Beaufort, and Southport. Their labors supplied salty oysters to taverns and hotels from Wilmington to Elizabeth City, and, once the first railroads had been built in the 1840s, to towns as far inland as Charlotte. In river towns, black vendors hawked fish and oysters through neighborhood streets every day at dawn.

Tonging for oysters was the coldest, dirtiest, and most hazardous fishery in North Carolina waters. To harvest the shellfish at their most flavorful and when they could be kept alive longest, oystermen worked during the dead of winter. Sailing dugout canoes, skiffs, or small, flat-bottomed scows (called "flatties") over the oyster rocks, they harvested the shellfish with short-handled, wood-headed tongs. Wrestling the oysters from the rocks was drenching wet, icy cold labor that wore down body and soul. A coastal visitor observed of local oystermen after the Civil War that "the injury to health from exposure is so great that few ever reach old age. Oystering was always a perilous vocation. The people who owned slave oystermen employed them instead of free labor in large part because of their fishing experience, knowledge of local waters, and boating skills. But oystering exemplifies the reasons why commercial fishing has always been even more dangerous than mining and logging. That African Americans played so dominant a role in those early fisheries had at least as much to do with the trade's perils as it did their prowess. ■



Thomas H. Jones, a slave stevedore in Wilmington, arranged his flight to New York with a black sailor on the brig "Bell." Engraving from Thomas H. Jones, "The Experience of Thomas H. Jones, Who Was a Slave for Forty-three Years" (Boston: Bazin and Chandler, 1862).

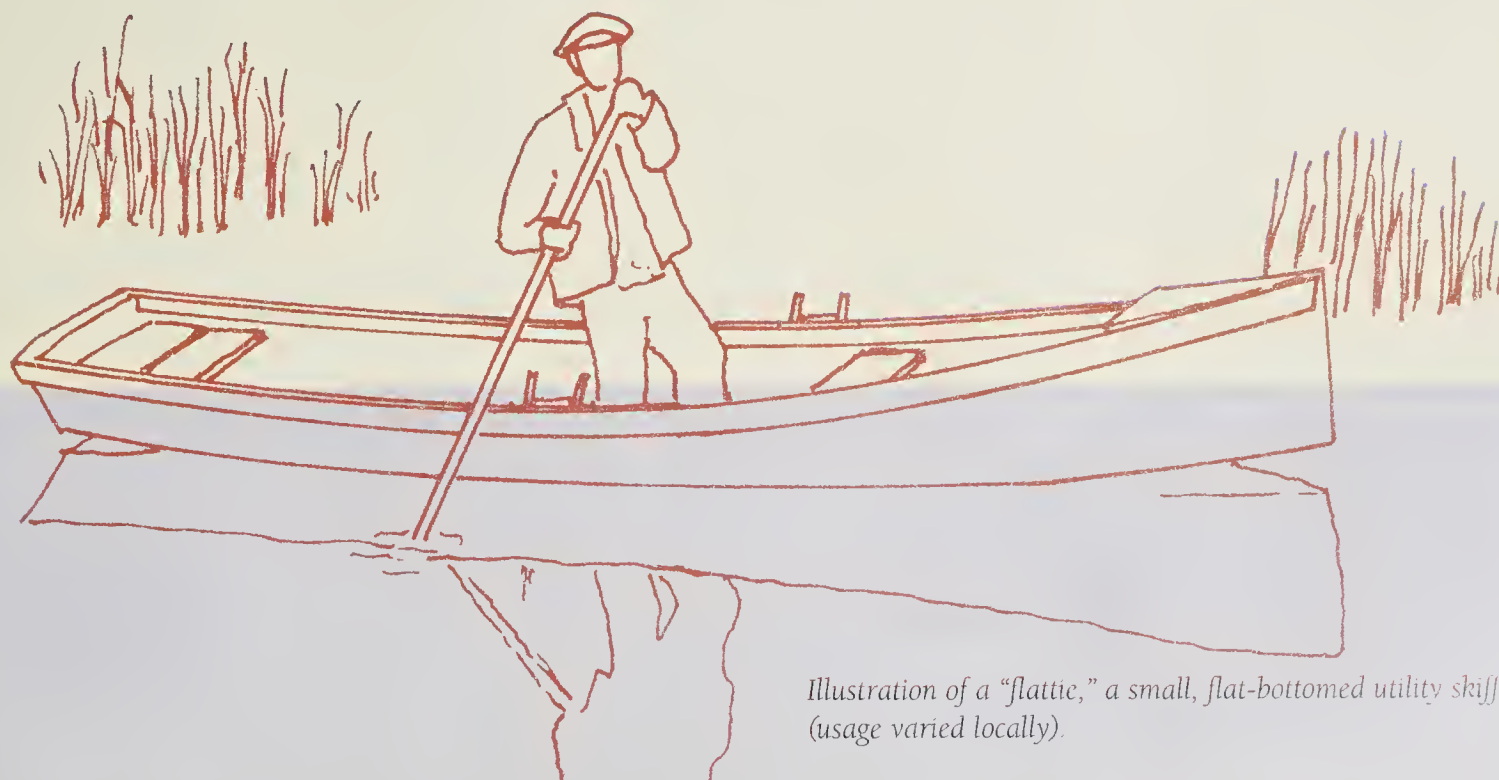
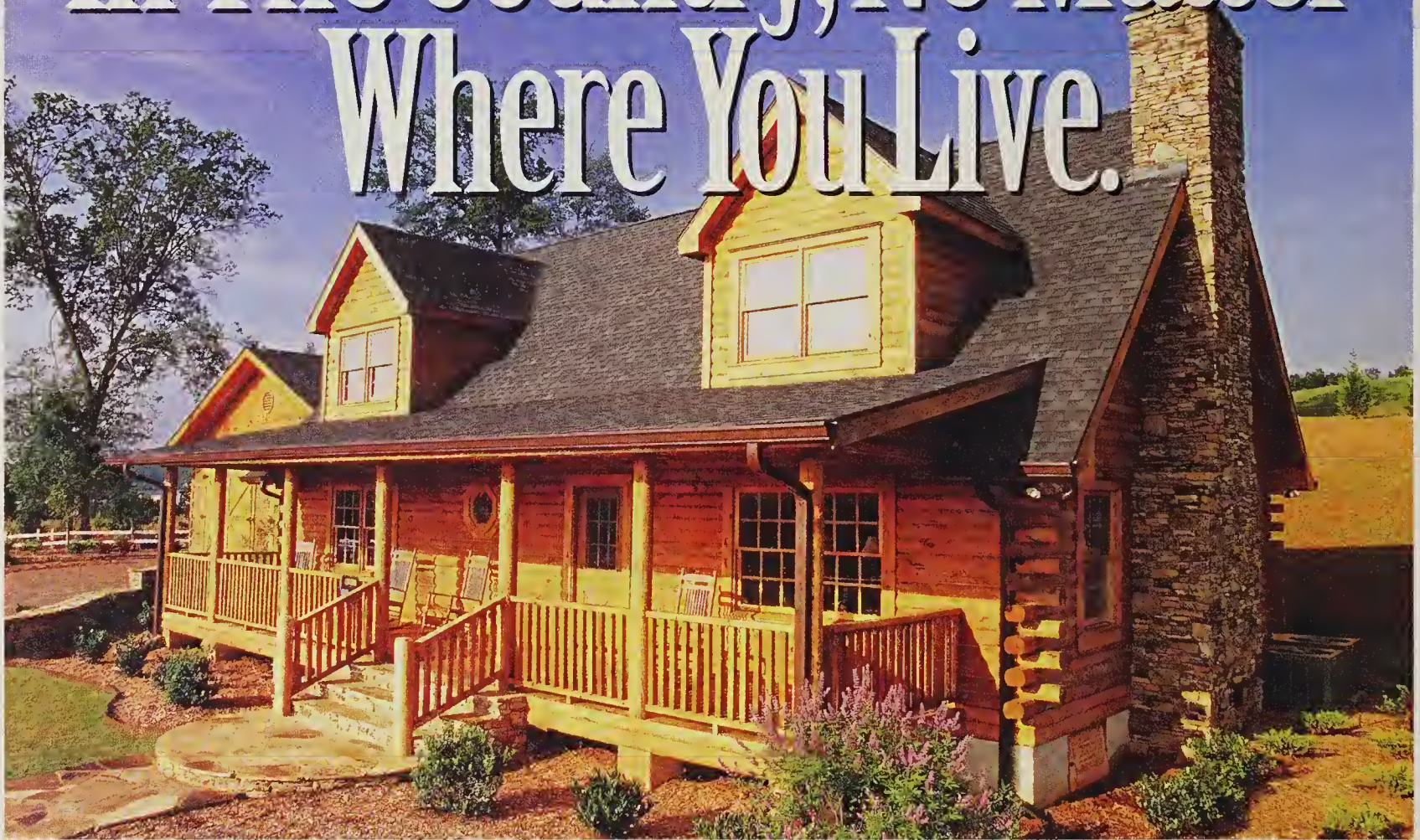


Illustration of a "flattie," a small, flat-bottomed utility skiff (usage varied locally).

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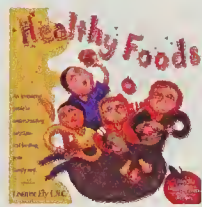
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Making family meals healthy, fun and tasty

After combating her own daughter's food allergies and making mealtime changes as a result, Rutherford County's Leanne Ely noticed that her family's level of health increased. The certified nutrition consultant decided to share her insights and experience in "Healthy Foods,"

a humorous guide to better nutrition for families.

Part cookbook, part eating plan, the book includes more than 100 recipes developed with nutrition, taste and quick preparation in mind. Choose from chuckle-inducing meal and snack titles such as: "Manic Meatloaf," "Mama's PMS Cake," and "Just the Flax Ma'am Muffins." Order the softcover book online for \$19.95 at www.championpress.com where you can also view sample recipes. Or call (414) 540-9873.

Slip into the skin of an animal

Experience life from the perspective of a cougar racing after prey, a dolphin playing in the waves, or an eagle soaring through the sky aboard a "ride the movies" attraction, March 15-November 15, at the North Carolina Zoo in Asheboro.

The SimEx Reactor™ is a mobile ride simulation theatre constructed inside a pair of tractor trailers, containing 18 seats equipped with motion bases. Computer-controlled hydraulics move the entire audience in synchronization with the actions on the screen. A video projection system and surround sound complete the experience.

SimEx attractions can be found worldwide in theme parks, science centers, museums, zoos and shopping centers. But the ride's visit to the zoo marks its first appearance in our state.

Two features will be shown — the conservation-oriented "Wilderness Adventure" and later in the year, "The Dinosaur Simulator."

The ride will cost \$3 in addition to zoo admission. Due to anticipated high demand, a reservations procedure may be implemented.

Check www.nczoo.org or call (800) 488-0444 for details.

Lexington artist reveals wildlife up close and personal



After 16 years as a commercial artist and illustrator, Greg Farrell gave up his art director position to concentrate on his beloved wildlife paintings fulltime. Over the next four years, Greg positioned himself among the nation's top wildlife artists by placing fourth in 1996 and third in 1998 at the

Federal Duck Stamp Contest in Washington, D.C. In 2001, he again placed fourth out of 246 total entries.

Greg traditionally works in acrylics, but has recently introduced watercolors and gouache to his range of media. His paintings stand out to wildlife art collectors for their intricate detail and realism.

Wildlife prints available for purchase at www.gregfarrell.com include the following animal subjects: raccoons, Carolina chickadees, bald eagles, red foxes, Canadian geese, pintail ducks, winter bluebirds, and spring cardinals. In 2002, he plans to release paintings of the North American cougar, the wild turkey and the gray wolf.

High quality reproductions range in price from \$60-\$185. Originals are also available.

Visit www.gregfarrell.com to order prints, children's T-shirts and greeting cards online. Write to him at 489 Arthur Tussey Rd., Lexington, NC 27295. E-mail: greg@gregfarrellart.com. Phone: (336) 731-3723.

Remember your loved ones



During holidays and other special times of the year, flowers appear on the graves of departed loved ones.

People visit cemeteries to invoke cherished memories of friends and family who have passed on, leaving the blooms as tokens of sentiment.

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"Between the Rivers"



The novel "Between the Rivers" explores the life and dreams of a woman living in early 20th-century rural North Carolina.

The story is based on author Carolyn Booth's family history, which took place around the three rivers referenced in the title:

the Cape Fear, the Black and the Northeast Cape Fear.

The main character, Maggie Lorena Corbinn, leaves her roots in Bladen County to attend the Baptist Female University in Raleigh. After tragedy strikes, she quits school and ends up teaching in the backwoods of Onslow County where she meets the love of her life.

Elements of the novel reflect Booth's love of the landscape between the rivers, the rich oral tradition of her childhood near Colly Creek, and her abiding interest in Southern food traditions, rural architecture and historical fact.

Selling in softcover for \$13.95, the book can be purchased by contacting Coastal Carolina Press at (877) 817-9900 or visit www.coastalcarolinapress.org.

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The day we *left* the old *white* house

When the time comes to move out of the family house for good, a flood of memories fills your heart

By Ellen Brooks

I honestly didn't think it would hurt me the way it did. I believed I could handle the sale of the big white house where I was born and raised. I believed that my five sisters, two brothers and I could meet there and do what had to be done without it tearing me apart. As I have been so many times before in my life, I was wrong.

I am 63 years old. I've known a lot of emotional, mental and spiritual pain. I have grown afraid of "hurting in my heart." I've been widowed and divorced. I lost a son in a construction accident when he was 22. I have a grandson who is autistic. I lost a sister to cancer and a brother to a heart attack. Both my parents are gone now.

Mama died after living more than 100 years. Daddy died many years before. Mama requested in her will that the house and some 155 acres of land be sold and divided equally among her children. We needed to clean up the house, divide the contents and give way to a new owner.

Mama was living with me when she died. But we kept house where we all grew up for the family to use when they came to see Mama and attend our yearly family reunion. The house and the property had remained "ours" until Mama left us to join Daddy.

I told myself over and over that it was just a house now. The master and the mistress were no longer in residence. No horses, cows, pigs, chickens or sheep were in the crumbling old barn. The granary was falling down, the woodhouse was gone and the springhouse was empty.

The dogs and cats had all died years ago. The little lambs we had raised on bottles were only a memory. I would name

them after country singers. People would laugh at a little lamb called "Hank" (Williams), "Roy" (Acuff) or "Eddy" (Arnold).

One time we had a little black goat that destroyed everything he touched. He ate the garden plants, the grapevines,

the clothes off the line and our school books. When my brother would come by in his new car, the goat would run and dance on the top, leaving marks with his tiny, pointed hoofs.

What a wonderful childhood I had, growing up in that big white house. Daddy was a farmer. Mama never worked at a public job. We didn't have electricity until I

was at least 10 years old. We didn't have a telephone or television until after I left home. The house did not have a bathroom until my brothers made one from part of a downstairs bedroom for Mama and Daddy as they were growing older.

I started to school when I was 5 years old. Along with my brother and sisters, I walked a mile and half to school and back every day. I didn't think of it as a hardship. In truth, I didn't think of it at all. It was the way we lived.

We were taught to take care of our "good" clothes. The first thing we would do when we got home from school was to change into our "everyday" clothes. The next thing I would do was to go looking for Mama. In the summer she would be outside in the fields or the garden. In the winter she would be in the warm kitchen.

Daddy was 19 years older than Mama. He had traveled over much of the United States before he married Mama and had 10 children. We received a daily paper, The Winston Salem Journal, all our lives. Daddy subscribed to Outdoor Life, Farm Journal, Progressive Farmer and other magazines.



We attended church on Sunday. Mama and Daddy were very interested in our education and expected us to graduate from high school.

I have always heard the saying, "Home is the one place that when you have to go there they have to take you in." In my case it proved to be completely true.

I had two small children and was pregnant with a third. I was in a marriage that was not working. I was afraid for myself and for my children. We were in desperate need of a home, and we found one with Mama and Daddy. My third child was born the winter we moved into the haven that was the big white house.

We lived there until the youngest child was 4. The two oldest children were in school. Mama and Daddy took care of the baby. I went to work in a local factory.

During the years we lived there, my children bonded with their grandparents in ways that would never have been possible if we had not lived together in the big white house.

When I could afford it I bought a house trailer and continued to live close to Mama and Daddy. Daddy died peacefully when he was 89 years old. Mama would stay in her house all summer and then move in with my husband, my new son and me for the winter months. When spring came to the mountains, she would go back to the big white house.

We lived this way for more than 20 wonderful years. I became a grandmother, Mama became a great-grandmother and finally a great-great grandmother. While Mama always stayed at my house during the winter, the big white family home remained the "campfire" around which the family continued to gather.

My twin sisters had arranged for the family to get together the last weekend in March. Spring was officially here and the time to sell the property was drawing near. They had decided that we would all come together in the old house and draw numbers for any items that we wanted. The person who drew number one would get first choice, number two second choice, and so forth. We would continue drawing until we ran out of choices.

The entire family was in agreement that this was a simple, totally fair, sensible way to handle the situation. The gathering and drawing was to be on Saturday.

On Thursday before the last weekend in March I went alone to the big, cold, empty white farmhouse. I walked through the five downstairs rooms. Then I made my way up the steep stairway to the four rooms, divided by a wide hallway, to the four bedrooms where we had slept as we grew up there.

Tears ran down my face as memories tumbled on top of memories. Cold knots filled my insides and my legs felt weak. My hands were trembling as I opened closet doors and touched various pieces of furniture. I sat down in Grandma's old rocking chair. I felt as if I would not – could not stand to see it all go.

With the dismantling and selling of the old white house, it seemed as if my childhood was leaving forever. I felt old, tired and totally out of step with the world I live in. The computer age surrounds me, and the old familiar world I once knew is slipping away, and I can't bring it back. Alone there in the house, I cried until I had no more tears to shed.

I read once that you should all be very careful to nurture good relationships with your brothers and sisters, because they are the only people in the entire world who have the same memories that you have. I believe that. Only my brothers and sisters can remember reading upstairs in bed by the light of a coal oil lamp. Only they can remember the tall lamp we used in the living room because it gave off more light than the smaller ones.

Only they can remember the joy of coming home from school in winter and finding the "warming closet" of the old wood cookstove full of fried apple pies. Only they can remember going to the barn in total darkness early in the morning to milk before we went to school. Or going into the back fields in the evening to bring the cows in for the evening milking.

Only they can see Daddy sitting reading in front of the fireplace with his feet propped against the side of the mantel, looking at us over his glasses. Only they can see Mama working in her garden or in her flowers.

The old toolbox that sat on the front porch all my life is now in my brother's house in Virginia. The little iron bed where we all slept when we were little is in my sister's house in Maryland along with Mama's old pedal sewing machine. The wooden desk with all its little cubicles is in my oldest son's home in Raleigh. Grandma's old clock sits on the mantel of my youngest son's home in Texas.

It would be interesting to know how many combined hours we all spent sitting on that old mealbox that now resides in my sister's house. Grandma's old rocker is keeping company with many antiques in the home of yet another sister.

The first living room suit Mama and Daddy ever owned is being refinished by a niece in Maryland. The last one is being used in another niece's house in Virginia. The wooden table that always sat in front of the windows in the big sunny room upstairs and the cast iron frying pan that Mama used every time she cooked are now in Tennessee.

A member of the family had placed a typewritten copy of an old poem on the mantel. The poem goes:

I wish the house was haunted
I wish it were, I do
It wouldn't look so lonely
If it had a ghost or two

I watched my brother cry quietly as he read these lines. I didn't touch him or say any words of comfort. I was struggling too hard to contain my own grief.

The Bible says that there is a time to live and a time to die. And I know there is a time for selling old family homes and getting on with the remaining years of our lives. But I did not know that it would be this hard.



Ellen Brooks lives in Glade Valley, Alleghany County, and is a member of Blue Ridge Electric. Her mother died in September 2000.



“Big Horse Creek at Ripshin”

Art by Stephen Shoemaker

“I grew up with this train,” says artist and Ashe County native Stephen Shoemaker. He can recall stories of derailling, wrecks and people working on the line where the Norfolk and Western railroad once ran through his West Jefferson hometown. This proximity may reveal why he so often features trains in his internationally-known paintings.

Shoemaker’s watercolor painting, “Big Horse Creek at Ripshin,” depicts a train traveling through Ripshin, a small northwest community in North Carolina, en route to Todd, N.C., from Abingdon, Va. This line was referred to as the “Virginia Creeper” because the train ran slowly and “crept” along at 25 miles per hour through mountainous terrain. This particular steam engine was well utilized, traveling to Todd through the 1940s, and to West Jefferson through the 1950s. Even today, the line receives use as the Virginia Creeper Trail, offering biking and hiking to the outdoor enthusiast.

The 26-by-19-inch offset lithographs of this limited edition print were created from Shoemaker’s watercolor painting. The prints cost \$85, plus shipping and handling. Contact the studio or gallery for more information.

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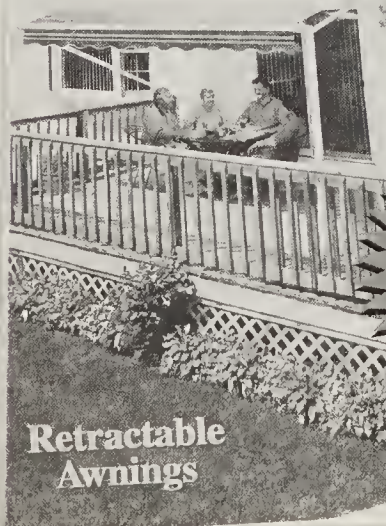


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New electric cooktops can be easy, safe and efficient

By James Dulley

Separate cooktops and ovens are becoming more popular because they can be convenient, comfortable and efficient. It makes sense to locate your hot oven away from your kitchen work area, especially during the summer. Locating the cooktop near the countertop food preparation areas is also more convenient.

The three basic types of electric cooking elements used in modern cooktops are: induction, halogen and radiant. Almost all of these are mounted in easy-to-clean, smooth black or white glass cooktops that look similar. Many cooktops use a combination of these various element types to provide flexibility in cooking and at a reasonable price.

Electric induction elements provide the best cooktop performance, safety and efficiency. Over the past several years, manufacturers have offered fewer induction elements; however, manufacturers have indicated there is a resurgence of interest in them. Induction ranges have one or two induction elements typically coupled with several radiant elements. Unlike other electric elements, induction elements provide precise temperature control equivalent to gas burners for gourmet cooks. Small single-element induction units are available that mount in a cooktop or a countertop. Plug-in lightweight, portable models are also available for use anywhere.

Induction elements heat the cooking utensils by creating a simple magnetic field through the cooktop. When a metal (iron or steel) pan is placed on the cooktop, the magnetic field passes through the pan causing the molecules to move, which creates heat in the pan. This makes induction elements very energy efficient. When you turn the dial down, the magnetic field is reduced and the heat to the pan immediately decreases, just like a gas flame. With all other types of heating elements, the element and the cooktop get hot and then transfer the heat to the pan on top. Magnetic waves only affect other magnetic materials such as iron and steel. If a child accidentally removes the pan, no more heat is created by the magnetic field and the cooktop is not as hot as with other elements. The only drawback to using induction elements is they are more expensive than other element types and you must use iron or steel cooking utensils on them.

Electric halogen elements come up to temperature quicker than standard smooth-top radiant elements. These elements include a high-intensity halogen light to heat and radiate energy to the cooking utensil for quick start up. They are not as popular because the newer ribbon-type radiant elements also heat up very quickly.

Radiant elements that glow red are the most popular and reasonably priced of all three element types. The standard ones (not ribbon types) heat up slower initially than induction or halogen elements and lack precise temperature control. The cooktop area above them gets very hot and stays hot for a long time.

For the most cooking flexibility, consider installing a truly modular electric cooktop. These have many optional interchangeable elements including halogen, griddles, steamers, woks, rotisseries and deep fryers you can switch at anytime. Smart elements that automatically sense the cooking utensil size and select the proper element size are also convenient and efficient. They also sense if the utensil is removed and turn off the heat for your children's safety.

Unlike a gas flame, most electric elements (except induction) are either on or off. At lower heat settings, they are just off a great percentage of the cycle. Some new high-tech models switch the heat on and off thousands of times per second to provide more even heating at the lower heat settings.

In addition to the number and types of cooking elements in the cooktop, consider the number and shape of the cooking zones. Some cooktops have various size heating areas in one combination element. Others have a small bridge element between two regular elements to create a large oval cooking zone for big roasting pots.

Write for (or instantly download - www.dulley.com) Utility Bills Update No. 870 - buyer's guide of 14 induction, halogen and radiant electric cooktop manufacturers (26 models) listing sizes, number of elements/cooking zones, types, shapes and features. Please include \$3.00 and a business-size SASE. James Dulley, Carolina Country, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244.

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New features include modular cooktops with changeable elements. This cooktop demonstrates a grill element.

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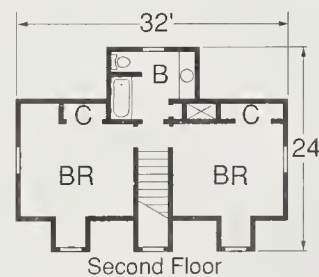
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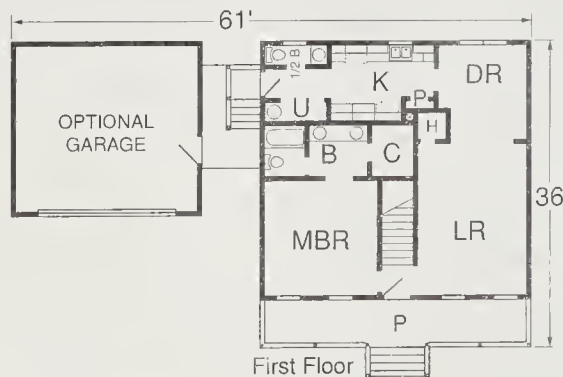
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Tar Heel talent takes the stage on Touchstone Energy's "Carolina Calling" TV series this spring

PERFORMERS SCHEDULED TO APPEAR ON TOUCHSTONE ENERGY'S "CAROLINA CALLING"

Noel Barefaat — Washington
Ken Borr — Taylorsville
Ryan Baysden — Solter Path
Treva Brackett with the Mystic Buzz Band—
Greensboro
Leann Medlin Broome — Monroa
Ernest Lee Brawn — Hickory
Mikele Buck — Aurora
Milton Bullock — Torboro-Princeville
By Faith — Enfield
Jonathan Byrd — Efflond
Leslie Carter — Morehead City
Mojo Collins — Wilmington
Amanda Dermid — Monroe
Amber Lee Daerr — Newport
The Foulkner Sisters & Brather June —
Wingate
Lesley Gaither — Olin
Jason Harrod — Durham
Hanna Hefner — Hickory
Deana Helms — Monroa
Janny Hershey — Chapel Hill
Hayley Janes — Beaufort
Levi Janes — Claremont
Reid Kerr — Wilmington
The Malpass Family — Palkackville
Prestan Masan — Chapel Hill
Laura McMohon — Morion
Lily Mantera — Wingate
Naah Paley — Hatteras
Mary Rocap & Silver — Cedar Grove
Sheldan Rogers — Waxhaw
Jeff Russell & Grass Strings — Concord
Elvis Schreck — Emerald Isle
Sans of God — Plymouth
Southern Junction — Salisbury
Leslie Ann Turner — Oobkora

More than 500 acts applied for a chance to appear on the revival of the all-new public television series, "Carolina Calling." Thirty-four made it

"Carolina Calling," presented by North Carolina's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, will debut April 6 at 8 p.m. and run on 13 consecutive Saturday nights on the UNC television network. The show is hosted by Hall of Fame entertainer and North Carolina native Arthur Smith and reprises the "Carolina Calling" variety show Smith hosted for more than 10 years on WBT television in Charlotte.

Smith said introducing new talent was the most enjoyable legacy of the old "Carolina Calling" show, and the new "Carolina Calling" will center on giving new talent a statewide television stage. The talent spans the musical horizon. Bluegrass, Spanish, Country-Western Opera, African-American Gospel, Contemporary

Christian, European folk and good old rock-and-roll were among the musical formats performed.

Performers submitted audition tapes for the right to compete in five Touchstone Energy "Carolina Calling" talent searches across the state. The talent searches were held in Wingate (hosted by Union Power Cooperative), Hickory (hosted by Rutherford EMC), Chapel Hill (hosted by Piedmont EMC), Morehead City (hosted by Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative) and in Williamston (hosted by Tideland EMC). The acts competed for a guest appearance on "Carolina Calling" before a panel of judges made up of local entertainment executives and officials.

"Carolina Calling" will also include guest appearances from nationally known performers such as Milton Bullock, an Edgecombe County native who starred with "The Platters." Maurice Williams, who wrote and performed rock-and-roll million sellers "Lil Darling" and "Stay," reminisces with Smith, who helped launched his career.

Special comedy appearances showcase North Carolina legends "John Boy and Billy," whose nationally syndicated "The Big Show" is based in Charlotte.

Much of "Carolina Calling" is performed at Charlotte's historic McGlohon Theatre.



Milton Bullock, who was first tenor with The Platters, is a member of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC since returning to his hometown in eastern North Carolina. He still performs as "The Golden Platter" and will be featured on Touchstone Energy's "Carolina Calling" public TV series airing Saturday evenings Beginning April 6. Reach Milton Bullock at (252) 823-3740 or at his Web site: www.thegoldenplatter.com

North Carolina cooperatives negotiate wholesale power supply contracts

North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation (NCEMC), the wholesale power supplier for North Carolina's electric cooperatives, has agreed to buy power from three major suppliers.

Officials from NCEMC — the nation's second largest energy cooperative — signed power acquisition contracts with American Electric Power Service Corporation (AEP) of Columbus, Ohio; Dominion of Richmond, Va.; and South Carolina Electric & Gas Company (SCE&G) of Columbia, S.C. These contracts will provide approximately 950 megawatts (mw) of electric power and beginning in 2003.

"These contracts will ensure our customers will receive reliable and affordable energy well into the future," said R. G. "Randy" Brecheisen, president of NCEMC and chief executive officer of Piedmont Electric Membership Corporation in Hillsborough. "Securing these power resources will also allow cooperatives to build upon their growing role of helping local officials bring new industry and jobs to the state, especially in rural North Carolina."

The contracts will supplement the 644 mw that NCEMC itself generates as part-owner of the Catawba Nuclear Generating Plant in York, S.C.



Nuclear energy plants remain at highest security

North Carolina's electric cooperatives have joined with other nuclear energy plant owners in complying with national-level guidelines for ensuring the highest possible security at nuclear-powered generating facilities.

The state's electric cooperatives' largest single source of electric power comes from their 644-megawatt ownership in the Catawba Nuclear Station in York, S.C. Besides the co-ops, the other utilities with a share of ownership in the plant are the North Carolina Municipal Power Agency Number 1, Piedmont Municipal Power Agency, Saluda River Electric Cooperative, Inc. and Duke Energy. Duke Energy is the licensee and operates the plant.

The following information is provided by the Nuclear Energy Institute.

Q: Are nuclear plants prepared for terrorist attacks?

A: Since September 11, companies operating nuclear plants have increased their security forces and put them on the highest state of alert. In addition, the Coast Guard, National Guard, and state police have supplemented these forces.

Nuclear plants are equipped for, and prepared to defend against, most types of attacks. They are structurally fortified to withstand the impact of natural forces like hurricanes and tornadoes and airborne objects up to a very substantial force. (See diagram.)

Reactors at nuclear power plants are enclosed in containment buildings made of steel and reinforced concrete up to four feet thick. Containments at nuclear power plants along the glide paths into airports are specifically designed to withstand airliner accidents. Containments at other nuclear plants not specifically designed for this event are still likely to be equally strong because of other design requirements, such as withstanding the impact of earthquakes and other natural forces.

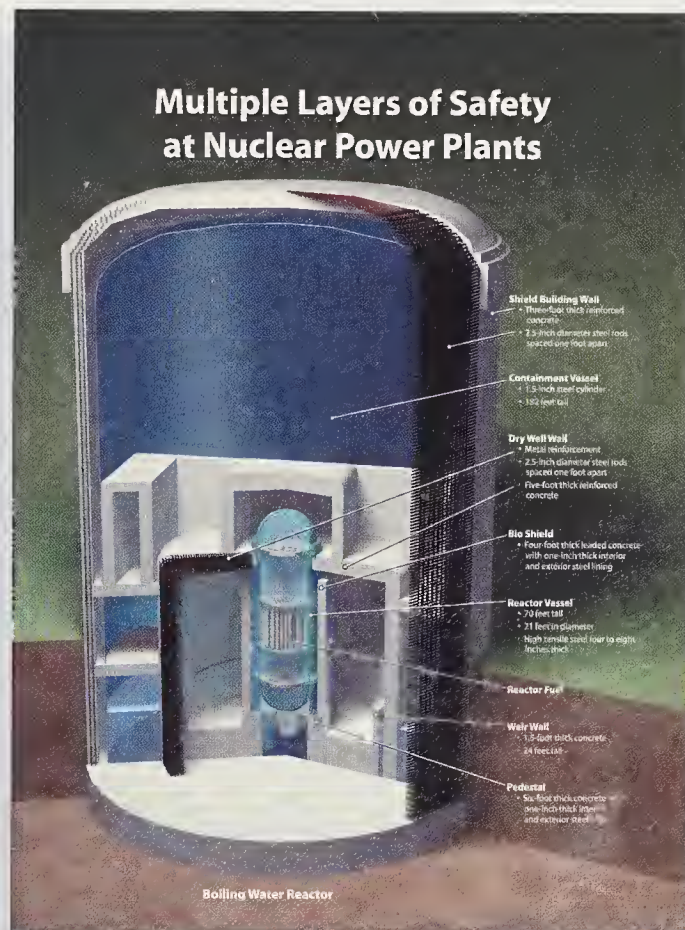
Q: What has the industry's response been to the terrorists attack on Sept. 11?

A: All U.S. nuclear plants went on the highest level of alert status immediately after the events of September 11, even before a security advisory was issued by federal authorities, and will maintain a heightened level of vigilance as long as circumstances dictate. Those measures include: adding additional security personnel and erecting physical barriers where needed; increasing patrols of grounds and perimeters; and restricting access by the general public.

Q: Critics claim that about half of U.S. nuclear plants have failed tests of their ability to defeat a terrorist attack. Is this true?

Nuclear plants have always been guarded 24 hours a day by heavily armed, well-trained security personnel. They have plans in place to fend off terrorist attacks. Their security personnel have received training to thwart terrorist attacks and have participated in drills and tests by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

Catawba and every nuclear facility in North Carolina have tested their evacuation plans for surrounding areas, if necessary, within 50 miles of the plants. These plans are regularly updated and drilled four times a year. The state, the NRC and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grade these practice sessions.



A: No. Nuclear power plants are required to guard against radiological sabotage, that is, a release of radiation at a harmful level resulting from a terrorist attack. Force-on-force exercises test a plant's ability to prevent a release of radiation, in part, by determining if the plant can prevent the mock insurgent force from reaching its "target."

Q: Are used nuclear fuel storage pools and container storage facilities vulnerable to terrorist attack?

A: Used fuel pools are located within the plant grounds and are protected by the same security force and electronic surveillance equipment as the rest of the plant. Plants have in place

stringent security measures to detect and repel any approach on the ground. Specially designed steel-lined pools for fuel storage are very difficult to spot from the air. These pools, located inside buildings at the plant, are designed to withstand the effects of an earthquake.

Q: Are used nuclear fuel transportation containers vulnerable to terrorist attack?

A: A number of procedures, specifications and regulations are already in place designed to protect containers transporting used nuclear fuel from attack as well as accident. Used nuclear fuel is transported only along highway or train routes that have been pre-approved and pre-inspected by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Striking a truck or train with an airplane would be almost impossible, given the small size of the target and the fact that it would most likely be moving. Even if this were to occur, used nuclear fuel containers are virtually impervious to destruction.

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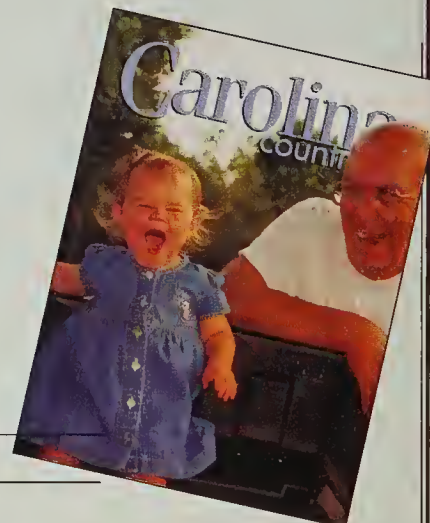
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How to move from your old computer to a NEW one

THE ONLY CONSTANT WITH COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGE. No matter how comfortable you are with your current PC, at some point you'll need to move on to a new one.

Perhaps you want to use programs that won't run on your old PC. Perhaps you've run out of hard disk space and memory. You can upgrade or replace these components, but with a computer more than three or four years old, it's often better to buy a new system.

"Migrating" to a new PC can range from hellish to exhilarating, depending largely on how well you prepare, and whether you're dealing with one PC or several hundred.

First, check if you can use your old programs and hardware peripherals with any new computer you're considering.

One key is the new computer's operating system. Check the Web site of the operating system vendor. Microsoft, for instance, lets you search the "Windows Catalog" to see if programs and peripherals are compatible with its new Windows XP operating system. You can also check the Web sites of the software and peripheral vendors.

If a program or peripheral is incompatible, all is not lost. Though it will cost you, upgrading a program usually brings added benefits. With peripherals, sometimes you can overcome compatibility obstacles.

In upgrading recently to a new HP Pavilion 2.0 gigahertz machine, I knew that my versatile 10-year-old Maxi Switch keyboard wouldn't work with it. It has an old keyboard-style plug, which I had been using on a newer computer with the help of a PS/2 adapter. So I bought a second adapter to let me plug the PS/2 adapter into the USB port of my brand new computer.

Belkin Components of Compton, Calif. (at www.belkin.com), sells a lot of adapters like this, though you may be able to buy a Belkin adapter less expensively, as I did, from a third-party vendor such as USB-Shop.com (www.usb-shop.com).

Next, plan how you'll be transferring your data from the old system to the new one. You have many options.

The simplest options, collectively dubbed "sneaker net," involve copying files onto floppy or Zip disks, Jaz portable hard disks, backup tapes, or writable CD or DVD discs and then walking them from one PC to the next.

With floppy disks, no single file can be larger than the 1.44-megabyte capacity of the disks unless you use a program to split up larger files into smaller pieces, such as Freebyte's free HJ-Split (www.freebyte.com). The floppy route though is too slow unless you're moving only a few files.

With Zip and Jaz disks and backup tapes, both the old and new computer must be equipped with the same technology. With writable CD or DVD discs, the old computer must have a writable optical drive.

Another option, if you're comfortable working inside a computer's case, is to remove the hard drive from the old PC and temporarily install it on the new PC. The new PC, though, has to use the same hard drive technology.

A third option is to transfer the files through the Internet using your Web space at your Internet service provider or an online storage service such as Xdrive (www.xdrive.com). This method is slow, though, unless you have a cable, DSL or other broadband connection.

One more option is to connect the two computers directly using a parallel, serial, USB or network cable. Windows can help here. In Windows XP, the Files and Settings Transfer Wizard can transfer files and Microsoft Office settings, saving you time if you've customized these programs. But you'll have to buy the appropriate cable unless you have an extra one around.

Third-party "system migration utilities" can do more, though you'll pay for the convenience.

PCsync from Laplink (www.laplink.com), comes with both a serial and USB cable. It supports 45 different programs and costs about \$75. IntelliMover from Detto Technologies (www.detto.com), supports 47 programs and costs less, about \$40 for the parallel-cable version and \$45 for the USB-cable version.

Aloha Bob PC Relocator from Eisenworld (www.alohabob.com), costs about \$40, comes with a parallel cable, and transfers entire programs. Unless you no longer have the installation discs, however, you're usually better off with fresh installations.

All three programs are appropriate for home users as well as small businesses.

If you're responsible for migrating many computers, an industrial-strength tool, such as the well-regarded PC Transplant Pro from Altiris (www.altiris.com), can automate the process. A 100-node license runs about \$2,000, with other license options available.

Reid Goldsborough is a syndicated columnist and author of the book "Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway." He can be reached at reidgold@netaxs.com or <http://members.home.net/reidgold>.



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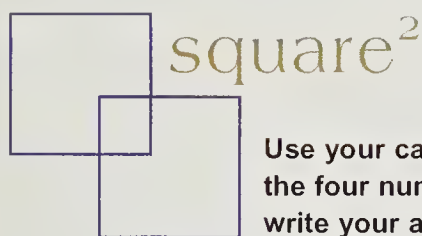
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Now find the square root of the four vertical numbers.

SOUTHERN exposure

Star in the center

Kathy Harris, Dean of Student Services at Montgomery Community College in Troy, wrote to tell us we were off center when we said in our January issue that the geographic center of North Carolina is in Chatham County.

Kathy, who is a commissioner for the town of Star in Montgomery County and also a Star correspondent for the Montgomery Herald, sent us a copy of an article she wrote for the Herald detailing how a spot "right near the eastern edge of Montgomery county, about a mile from Star," has been officially designated the exact geographic center of our state, with two official state markers put down to mark the spot.

And that's not all. Judy Stevens, Director of the Economic Development Corporation at the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (and a native of Star), says it's "in the works" to get a sign erected on I-73/74 (220 Bypass) proclaiming the location of North Carolina's hub.

The existing markers are on land owned by Mark York. To stand on them you make a trek down a gravel road and turn left between his third and fourth chicken houses. (I hope these directions are put on the projected highway sign.)

It took a lot of work by a lot of people to locate the spot for the markers. (One is an outlined map of the state with a star; the other has a triangle with a dot inside marking the exact location.)

It all started when Star Mayor Frank Kersey read an article on the October 1988 issue of The State magazine identifying

OH, KAY!



"2B or not 2B-
which exit do we
take for Hamlet?"

Montgomery County as the center of the state. Source of the information was Gary Thompson, Chief of Field Operations with the N.C. Geodetic Center. Kersey recruited Thompson, a native of Troy, to pinpoint the location.

More and more people got involved. Lt. Dave Shepherd of the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion at Fort Bragg coordinated a community affairs project to do the survey work. A team from the 37th Engineering Battalion was recruited to do the job.

Eventually this group and about eight other surveyors set out with a Global Positioning System to mark the spot. They placed a compact computer receiver and antenna in position and programmed it to receive readings from four of eight Navistar satellites orbiting the earth at that time.

The project took about two weeks to complete.

As children, most of us probably believed that the world centered around us. We Tar Heels still tend to think that the world centers around North Carolina. Now, thanks to the cooperative efforts of a great number of people, any one of you readers can stand on a star near Star and know that, for a little while, North Carolina centers around you.



ANSWERS ARE ON PAGE 42.

marketplace

HOME AND BUILDING



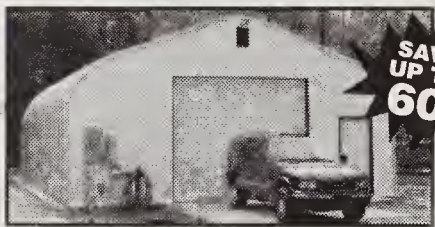
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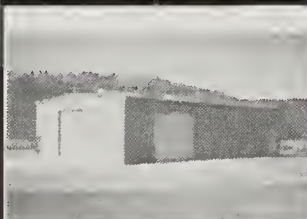
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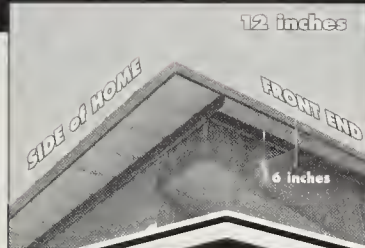
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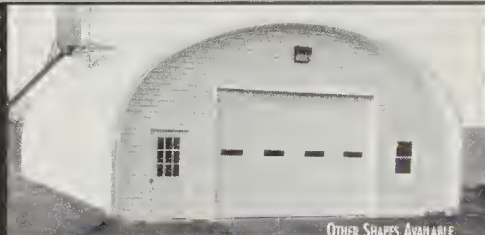


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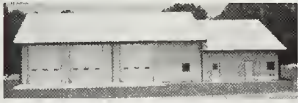
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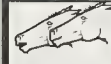


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Like a page from a Farmer's Almanac, March predicts that spring, summer and autumn gardening pleasures and chores are on the way. Spring marks fertilizing time for evergreen trees and shrubs as well as deciduous trees and shrubs that didn't receive fall feedings. Individual shrubs need two to four cups of complete fertilizer, such as 5-10-10, 8-8-8 or 10-6-4. Small plants need less; large plants need more. Rake back mulch, apply fertilizer and replace mulch. For broadleaf evergreens such as hollies, azaleas and camellias, feed half fertilizer in early spring or late winter—or after blooming. Apply remainder one month to six weeks later.

Spring into summer

- 🌿 In late March or early April, prune too-tall azaleas or camellias in need of shaping or thinning.
- 🌿 Purchase tomato plants resistant to Fusarium or Verticillium wilt. Avoid tall, spindly or leggy plants. Select good, stocky, disease-and-insect-free plants.
- 🌿 Summer fireflies (lightnin' bugs) produce offspring beneficial to gardens. These larvae devour aphids, snails and slugs.
- 🌿 Lace bug is a common pest on mums, pyracantha, sycamore trees and rhododendron. These tiny, light-colored, clear-winged insects suck juice from the lower sides of leaves. Examine the upper sides of leaves for white speckles. To control lace bugs, spray or dust with malathion or spray with Cygon. Always follow directions closely on bottles or packages of chemicals.
- 🌿 Mow established lawns. Rake up clippings and any dead grass from winter. Begin black spot and powdery mildew control on roses. Spray and/or dust for an early start on insect and disease control.
- 🌿 After spring-flowering bulbs complete their bloom cycle, fertilize with a bit of superphosphate or bone meal to ensure quality blooms next year. Prune dead wood from roses. Leave three or four upright canes of varying heights.
- 🌿 On mild days, move houseplants outdoors to a semi-shaded spot for a few hours to let them acclimate to the upcoming outdoor vacation.
- 🌿 Apply pre-emergence herbicides to lawns for broadleaf and crabgrass control.

Control leaf gall

Fall-and-winter-flowering camellias, sasanquas and azaleas sometimes show signs of leaf gall. At this time of year, diseased leaves are thick and distorted in shape and then turn white as spores are shed. Control outbreaks by removing diseased leaves while powdery spores develop. Spray the entire plant—both upper and lower sides of leaves—with ferban, Bordeaux mixture or a fixed copper. Apply just before flower buds open and again after flowering. Follow instructions.

Coloring summer

Sow the seeds of certain flowering annuals directly into well-prepared flowerbeds. These include: alyssum, poppy,

cornflower, globe amaranth, and strawflower, which is popular for dried arrangements in winter. Other bedding plants may be started indoors for late planting outside. In a few weeks, these slow-to-bloom annuals will be available at garden centers: candytuft, rudbeckia, verbena and gaillardia.

Vegetable gardening

Till your vegetable garden now. Organic matter and compost piled on soil during winter months need to be turned under. Along with liberal amounts of complete fertilizer (unless a soil test shows the need for a special mix), this provides a good area for growing vegetables. After preparing the ground, set out cabbages, collard plants, Irish potatoes and onions. Sow seeds of carrots, mustards, beets, radishes, chives, English peas, leaf lettuce and turnips.

Guarding chemicals

Although most pesticides and some fertilizers are inflammable, they can still cause a smoldering fire. Fumes can be toxic to both humans and animals and fatal to plants. Aerosol cans, some soil fumigants, emulsion forms of insecticides, and nitrate fertilizers carry an explosive hazard. It's wise to store such materials in a locked, fire-resistant cabinet, preferably outside the home. Local fire department or volunteer firefighters can recommend the best type of fire extinguisher to have on hand for use on various kinds of chemicals. Mount the extinguisher near the door of the storage room.



Carol Rascoe sent in this photo of her mother's giant collards and garden in Windsor as part of the "Best Garden I Ever Saw" on p. 16-18. Her parents are members of Roanoke Electric Cooperative.

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March *EVENTS*



Visit the Folk Art Center in Asheville for a special exhibit through March 10, "From Tapestries to Table Linen: Domestic Textiles from the Guild's Permanent Collection." Call (828) 298-7928 for more information. Photo by Tim Barnwell of Cherokee dolls made by Goingback Chiltoske, 1946.

MOUNTAINS (west of I-77)

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March 30, "Jim & Jesse", West
Jefferson, 7:30 p.m. \$10,
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Asheville Art Museum

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March 21-24, North Wilkesboro
Benton Hall, (336) 838-PLAY

Arts & Spring Craft Show

March 22-24, Mount Airy
Colonial Mayberry Mall, Fri.-
Sat., 10-9 p.m.; Sun., 1-6 p.m.
(336) 786-1005

"Death of a Salesman"

March 23, Spindale
Isothermal Community College
7:30 p.m., adults \$15, students
\$5, (828) 286-9990

Super Saturday

March 23, Tryon
Downtown, arts festival for
children, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.,
(828) 859-6282

German Heritage Festival

March 23, Pinnacle
Food, stories & traditions from
Germany, Noon-4 p.m., free
(336) 325-2298

"Murder.com" Murder Mystery Dinner Theatre

March 23, West Jefferson
Jefferson United Methodist
Church, interactive dinner the-
atre that involves the audience
in unexpected ways,
(336) 246-ARTS (4483)

Walking the Wetlands

March 23, Nebo
Lake James State Park
Hike two miles round trip and
view wetland wildlife
Free, 10 a.m., (828) 652-5047

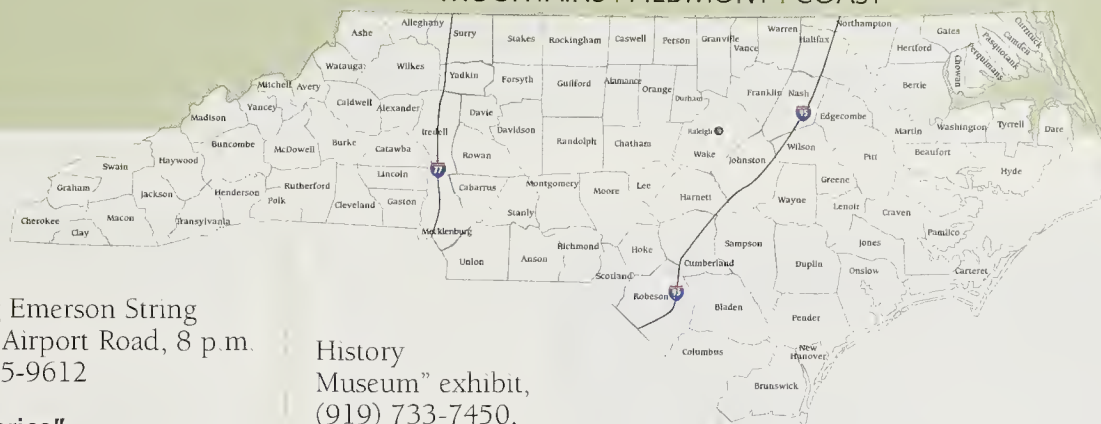
Before Easter Baskets, There Were Rabbits' Nests

March 30-31, Pinnacle
Egg dyeing and egg hunts
for children of all ages
Free, (336) 325-2298

Merlefest 2002

April 25-28, Wilkesboro
Bluegrass music festival, fea-
tures legend "Doc Watson,"
three instrument contests &
songwriter's contest, (800) 343-
7857, www.merlefest.org

MOUNTAINS | PIEDMONT | COAST



PIEDMONT

(between I-77 and I-95)

N.C. Museum of History

Ongoing events, Raleigh
Through April 7, "On Miniature
Wings: Model Aircraft from the
National Air and Space
Museum," (919) 735-8655

Museum of Life and Science

Ongoing events, Durham
Through March, mongoose
lemurs exhibit,
Through April 30, "Bodies in
Motion," (919) 220-5429
www.ncmls.org

Fearrington Village Center

Ongoing events, Pittsboro
March 1, Book reading by
George Pelecanos
(919) 542-3030
March 10, Breadmaking class
(919) 542-2121,
www.fearrington.com

Sandhills Community College Classical Concert Series

Ongoing events, Pinehurst
March 3, Moore County Choral
Society Classical Concert, \$10
at door
March 11, Classical Concert

featuring Emerson String
Quartet, Airport Road, 8 p.m.
(910) 215-9612

"Dinostories"

Through April 27, Oxford
Granville County Museum
A hands-on all ages exhibit
Wed.-Fri. 10-4 p.m., Sat. 11-3
p.m., free, (919) 693-9706

Timberlake-Wyeth Art Exhibit

Through April 28, Chapel Hill
Museum, Paintings by Bob
Timberlake and Andrew Wyeth,
Thu.-Sat. 10-4 p.m., Sun. 1-4
p.m., (919) 967-1400

Tibetan Portrait: The Power of Compassion

Through June 2, Raleigh
Exploris, I-MAX film, (919)
834-4040, www.exploris.org

Fine Arts Lecture Series

Ongoing events, Southern Pines
Weymouth Center
March 3-4, "The Legendary City
of Djenne and the Mali Empire"
7:15 p.m., Sun.; 10:30 a.m., Mon.
March 17-18, "The National
Museum of the American
Indian: New Insights into
American Indian History" Sun.,
7:15 p.m.; Sat., 10:30 a.m.
March 24-25, "Athens Art
Museum and the
Archeological Digs in
Greece and Egypt," Sun.,
7:15 p.m.; Mon., 10:30 a.m.,
(910) 692-4356

Canoeing, Kayaking & Boating

Ongoing trips/tours,
Pittsboro, (919) 542-5502,
www.rockrest.com

Museum of Natural Sciences

Ongoing events, Raleigh
March 16, Celebrate St.
Patrick's Day with snakes,
lizards, turtles, frogs and
more! free, 10-5 p.m.,
Through June 2, "Wildlife
Photographer of the Year
from the British Natural

History

Museum" exhibit,
(919) 733-7450,
www.naturalsciences.org

Sandhills Theater

Ongoing events, Southern Pines
Sunrise Theater
March 7 & 14, International
Film Festival, 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
March 15-17, 20-24, "Steel
Magnolias," 8 p.m. (2:30 p.m.
Sun.), \$12/weekdays,
\$15/weekends, (910) 692-4356

Horse Shows

Ongoing events, Williamston
Senator Bob Martin Eastern
Agricultural Center
March 2-3, "One Dressage
Show," free
March 8-10, "NC Barrel
Bonanza," free
March 15-17, "Old Dominion
Arabian Horse Show"
(252) 792-5111

An Original Play

Through March 3, Raleigh,
Theatre in the Park, (919) 831-
9475, www.theatreinthepark.com

Annual Southern Spring Show

Through March 3, Charlotte
Charlotte Merchandise Mart
500 exhibitors, (800) 849-0248
www.southernspringshow.com

African-American Arts Festival

Through March 18, Greenboro
Various locations,
(336) 373-7523

Mint Museum of Craft + Design

Through March 31, Charlotte
"Findings: The Jewelry of
Ramona Solberg"
(704) 337-2000

Mint Museum of Art

Ongoing Exhibits, Charlotte
March 2-July 28, "Pierre Joseph
Redoute: A Man Passionate
About Flowers"
Through March 31, "William
Morris: Myth, Object and the

Animal,"

Through April 21, "The Gilded
Age: Treasures from the
Smithsonian American Art
Museum"
Through April 28, "Ansel
Adams: The Man Who Captured
the Earth's Beauty Part II,"
Through June 16, "Art Glass:
The Collection of Marjorie and
Robert McDorman, (704) 337-
2000, www.mintmuseum.org

The Work of Joe Nesbitt

Through March 31, Wrightsville
Beach, Wrightsville Beach
Museum, resident photographer
(910) 256-2569, www.wilmington.org/wbmuseum

Oakboro Regional Museum

Through April 2, Oakboro
"Natural Histories and
Treasures", rocks and minerals
from Stanly County, free, Sun &
Mon. 2-4 p.m.; Thurs. 10 a.m.-
Noon, (704) 485-3612

Gunsmith Exhibit

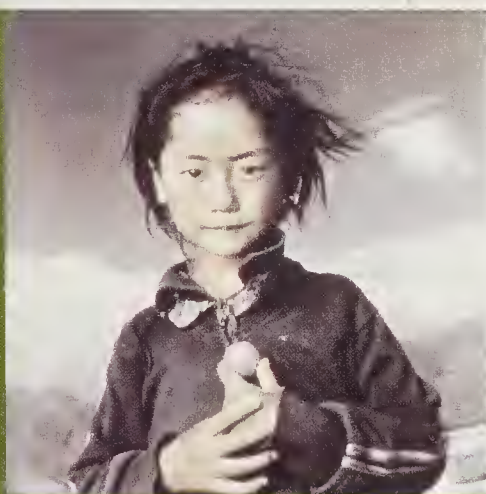
Through Sept. 22, Winston-
Salem, The Gallery at Old
Salem, "Gunsmiths of Salem
and the Vogler Family of
Artisans," (888) OLD-SALEM
www.oldsalem.org

Gallery Opening: 5th Annual ACMC Young People's Fine Arts Festival

March 1, Southern Pines
Campbell House Galleries,
5:30-7:30 p.m.,
(910) 692-4356

Nickel Creek

March 1, Winston-Salem
Stevens Center, an evening of
bluegrass music, 8 p.m.,
\$21/\$19, (336) 721-1945
www.ncarts.edu/stevens



Stop by Exploris in Raleigh to view the
I-MAX film, "Tibetan Portrait: The
Power of Compassion" showing through
June 2. Call (919) 834-4040 or visit
www.exploris.org for details.

MARCH EVENTS



The traveling exhibition, "On Miniature Wings: Model Aircraft from the National Air and Space Museum," will land at the N.C. Museum of History in Raleigh from the end of January through April 7. Admission is free. Photographer: Eric Long, Smithsonian Institution.

Bridal Fair

March 2, Statesville
Statesville Civic Center
10 a.m.-3 p.m., admission \$5;
grooms w/brides free,
(704) 664-3772

Highfalls Fiddlers' Convention

March 9, Robbins
North More High School,
6:30 p.m., \$6, (910) 464-3600

NC Symphony, All Orchestra Concert

March 12, Southern Pines
Robert E. Lee Auditorium
Pinecrest High school, 8 p.m.
(910) 295-4043

"Unifour Parade of Gems"

March 15-17, Hickory
Metro Convention, gem,
mineral and jewelry show, Fri.
9-7 p.m., Sat. 10-6 p.m., Sun.
12:30-5 p.m., (828) 328-9107

"Renewed"

March 15-16, Lexington
A spiritual conference for
women, Fri. 7-9 p.m., Sat. 9-4
p.m., \$20, (336) 357-2875

Multicultural Arts Festival

March 16, Reidsville
Chinqua-Penn Plantation
All-day arts festival by local
high school students
(800) 948-0947, ext. 37

Music Fills the Air in Durham

March 20, 22-
24, Durham
A weekend of
musical events
"Duke Collegium
Musicum" Fri.,
Noon, Duke
Chapel, free
(919) 660-3300
"H.M.S.
Pinafore," a
musical comedy,
Fri.-Sat. 8 p.m.
& Sun. 2 p.m.,
Carolina Theatre
Students \$10,
Seniors \$18,
Public \$20,
(919) 560-2787,
www.durhamnc.com/calendar/index.html

Bunny Day

March 23, Greensboro
Natural Science Center of
Greensboro, fun activities for
kids, plus Easter Bunny visit,
(336) 288-3769, www.greensboro.com/sciencecenter/

Old Fashioned Planters Day

March 23-24, White Oak
Butler Farms, NC 53 W
(910) 866-4212

Gardening Symposium

March 28, Columbia
Demos, plant and book sale,
featured speakers, \$40, (803)
438-6486, patpink@usit.net

Kiddo's Kloset Easter Egg Hunt

March 28, Shelby
Ages 2-8, Bring your own
basket, 6 p.m., (704) 484-3100

Easter Egg Hunt

March 30, Pinehurst
Cannon Park, face painting,
candy, toys and prizes, 10:30
a.m., (910) 295-1901

Southeastern

Horseshoers Spring Clinic

March 30, Monroe
9 a.m., (704) 843-1466

COAST

(east of I-95)

"How I Learned to Drive"

Through March 5, Greenville
East Carolina University
McGinnis Theatre,
(252) 328-6829

"Pages of the Book"

Through March 10, Morehead
City, Maritime Museum,
photography exhibit by a local
artist, Weekly 9-5 p.m., Sat.
10-5 p.m., Sun. 1-5 p.m., free,
(252) 728-7317

Middle Eastern Rug Show

March 10-30, Elizabeth City
Pasquotank Arts Council
Gallery, 10-5 p.m. weekdays,
Free, (252) 338-6455

Roanoke Doll Show & Sale

March 16, Martin County
Farmer's Market, U.S. Hwy
13/64 W., 10-4 p.m.,
(252) 792-5142

St. Patrick's Day Parade

March 17, Elizabeth City
Downtown, 10 a.m.
(252) 338-4104

Festival of Independent Film

March 20-24, Wilmington
Feature films, shorts and docu-
mentaries, (910) 343-5995
www.cucalorus.org

Visiting Artists

Work in New Medium

March 22, Edenton
5:30 p.m., (800) 775-0111
www.edenton.com

Easter Egg Hunt

March 22, Cape Fear
Hugh MacRae Park, 9:45 a.m.
(910) 395-1940

N.C. Aquarium at Fort Fisher

March 22, Kure Beach
"Waters of the Cape Fear"
Grand re-opening, (910) 458-
8257, www.aquariums.state.nc.us/ff/index.htm

Easter Bunny Arrives

March 23, Elizabeth City
Southgate Mall, 10-9 p.m., free
(252) 338-2848

N.C. Seafood Festival

March 23, Morehead City
Crystal Coast Civic Center,
7 p.m.-Midnight,
(252) 726-6273

Herb and Garden Fair

March 23, Wilmington
Enjoy classes during the day
and a plant and garden sale.
Poplar Grove Plantation,
(910) 686-9518, ext. 26
www.poplargrove.com

226th Anniversary of Battle of Moores Creek Bridge

March 24, Cape Fear
Music programs, story telling
and re-enactment of the famous
battle, free, (910) 283-5591

Brentano String Quartet

March 27, Oriental
Pamlico Civic & Cultural
Center, \$12, (252) 249-3079
www.pamilocmusic.org

Airlie Gardens

March 22-28, Wilmington
Heritage week & 100th birth-
day, tours, lectures, tea parties
for children and a birthday
celebration, (910) 793-7531
airliegarden.wilmington.org

13th Annual Performance of Handel's "Messiah"

March 30, Pinetown
Terra Ceia Christian Reformer
Church, free, 8 p.m.
(252) 943-2957

LISTING INFORMATION

Deadline for May: March 22
Deadline for June: April 25

A phone number must be
included with event listings
in order to be published.
Photos are welcome.

Send notices to: Carolina
Compass, P.O. Box 27306,
Raleigh, NC 27611 | Fax:
(919) 878-3970 | e-mail:
carolina.country@ncemcs.com

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VACATION CABIN in the mountains of Western North Carolina. Real chink logs, jacuzzi, fireplace and covered porch. No smoking – No pets. (828) 627-6037. www.treasurecovecabins.com.

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FLORIDA KEYS: 2B/2B timeshare. Sleeps six. April 27th – May 4th. \$650 – (954) 597-0623.

CAMPING – Wysocking Bay Store & Campground ... great area for hunting and fishing ... camping rates by the day, week or month. 5 miles west of Englehard, NC 1.5 miles off Highway 264. (252) 925-3826.

DAYTONA OCEAN FRONT CONDO – Kitchen, two double beds, sleeper sofa - \$500.00 week. Discounts long term stay. (704) 568-5774.

For Sale

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CHURCH PEW, pulpits, cushions, steeples, baptistries, worship chairs, stained glass, etc. Financing available. Gabriel Church Services 1-800-639-7397. www.newpews.com.

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APPLE TREES – OLD SOUTHERN VARIETIES, Free catalog; custom grafting and shipping available. David C.Vernon, Reidsville, NC (336) 349-5709 or dcvernon@netpath.net.

HEARING AID SALE, savings to 70%. From \$158.00, digital \$499.95, \$15.00 month, free catalog, free trial. 1-800-249-4163 anytime. Hearing Power Direct, Marty, SD 57361.

PUTTING DOWN ROOTS? PLANT BLUEBERRIES! Free catalog. 6 plant collection selected for your area, includes instruction book and shipping, \$36.00. Highlander Nursery, PO Box 177, Pettigrew, AR 72752. 1-888-282-3705.

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WORK PANTS AND SHORTS – \$3.00 each, 4 pair for \$10.00 up to 38, size 40 and up \$3.00 pair. Shirts \$1.00 each. Add \$5.00 for S&H. Call (828) 328-1570 or write for order form: Money's Wholesale, 2011 Robinson Road, Newton, NC 28658.

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The Mast General Store, a western North Carolina landmark, has published a new cookbook, "Mast Store Cooks," with over 250 recipes contributed by store staff, the Mast family and Mast Store Deli cooks. Copies cost \$15.95 plus \$4.75 shipping (add 96 cents sales tax in North Carolina) from Mast General Store, Highway 194, Valle Crucis, NC 28691. Phone orders: (828) 963-6511.

MAST STORE COOKS

From Potluck Dinners
to the Potbelly Stove

Coconut Cake

- 1 white cake mix
- 1 1/3 cups water
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 3 large egg whites
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 (7-ounce) bag coconut
- 1 (8-ounce) carton frozen nondairy whipped topping

Blend cake mix, water, oil and egg whites in large bowl at low speed until moistened, about 30

seconds. Beat at medium speed for 2 minutes. Pour in greased sheet pan; bake in preheated 350-degree oven until done (30 minutes, more or less). Remove from oven and punch holes with large meat fork. Combine milk, sugar and coconut in pan and boil for 1 minute. Cool slightly and spread evenly over cake. When cool, spread whipped topping over top and sprinkle with a little more coconut. Keep refrigerated.

Coconut Cream Eggs

- 1 package (8-ounce) cream cheese, softened
- 1 tablespoon butter (no substitutes), softened
- 4 cups confectioners' sugar
- 1 cup flaked coconut
- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 tablespoon shortening

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and butter until smooth. Add sugar and coconut. Refrigerate for 1 1/2 hours or until easy to handle. Using your hands dusted with confectioners' sugar, mold rounded tablespoonfuls of coconut mixture into egg shapes. Place on a waxed paper-lined baking sheet. Freeze for 2 hours or until slightly firm. Melt chocolate chips and shortening. Remove eggs from the freezer a few at a time; dip into chocolate mixture until completely coated. Return to waxed paper; refrigerate until hardened. Store in the refrigerator.

Fresh Veggie Pizza

- 2 tubes crescent rolls
- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese
- 1 package ranch salad dressing mix
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 3 to 4 ounces grated cheese
- Vegetables – broccoli, cauliflower, green pepper, red pepper, tomatoes, cucumber (or vegetables of your choice)

Unroll crescent roll dough and press into the bottom of a baking pan coated with non-stick cooking spray; seal seams and perforations. Bake at 375 degrees for 11 - 13 minutes or until golden brown. Cool completely.

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, ranch dressing mix and mayonnaise until smooth. Spread over crust. Sprinkle with vegetables and cheese. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving. Cut into squares.



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